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THE RAMBLER.

VOLUME THE FIFTH.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magiſtri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempeſtas, deferor hoſpes.

HOR.

LONDON:

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MOTTOS

MOTTOS AND QUOTATIONS IN THE FIFTH VOLUME TRANSLATED.

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NUMB.

137 ——Whilſt fools one vice condemn,
They run into the oppoſite extream. CREECH.

138 With me retire and leave the pomp of courts
For humble cottages and rural ſports.

139 Let ev'ry piece be ſimple and be one.

140 What doating bigot to his faults ſo blind,
As not to grant me this, can *Milton* find?

141 Greatneſs with eaſe, and gay ſeverity,

142 A giant ſhepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the reſt, and ſolitary reigns,
In ſhelter thick of horrid ſhade reclin'd;
And gloomy miſchiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in ſtature or in face. POPE.

143 Leſt when the birds their various colours claim,
Stripp'd of his ſtolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should ſtand the laughter of the public ſcorn.
FRANCIS.

To tame the proud, the fetter'd ſlave to free:
Theſe are imperial arts, and worthy thee.
DRYDEN.

Let *Cæſar* ſpread his conqueſts far,
Leſs pleas'd to triumph than to ſpare.

NUMB.

Unleſs the *Iliad* had been publiſhed, his name had been loſt in the tomb that covered his body.

Before great *Agamemnon* reign'd.
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whoſe huge ambition's now contain'd
In the ſmall compaſs of a grave:
In endleſs night they ſleep, unwept, unknown;
No bard had they to make all time their own.
FRANCIS.

Why in ſo ſmall a circuit of life ſhould we employ ourſelves in ſo many fatigues?

Why do we aim with eager ſtrife
At things beyond the mark of life? FRANCIS.

The pow'rs of vengeance while they hear,
Touch'd with compaſſion, drop a tear;
Ixion's rapid wheel is bound,
Fix'd in attention to the ſound. F. LEWIS.

Subdu'd at length, *Hell*'s pitying monarch cry'd,
The ſong rewarding, let us yield the bride.
F. LEWIS.

Nor yet the golden verge of day begun,
When *Orpheus*, her unhappy lord,
Eurydice, to life reſtor'd,
At once beheld, and loſt, and was undone.
F. LEWIS.

Quit, quit this barren trade, my father cry'd;
Ev'n *Homer* left no riches when he dy'd ——
In verſe ſpontaneous flow'd my native ſtrain,
Forc'd by no ſweat or labour of the brain.
F. LEWIS.

The age's miracle, his father's joy!
Nor old you wou'd pronounce him, nor a boy.
F. LEWIS.

144 The bow of *Daphnis* and the ſhafts you broke;
When the fair boy receiv'd the gift of right;
And but for miſchief, you had dy'd for ſpight.
DRYDEN.

145 What though the muſe her *Homer* thrones
High above all th' immortal quire;
Nor *Pindar*'s rapture ſhe diſowns,
Nor hides the plaintive *Cæan* lyre:
Alcæus

NUMB.

Alcæus ſtrikes the tyrant's ſoul with dread,
Nor yet is grave *Steſichorus* unread. FRANCIS.

146 'Tis poſſible that one or two
Theſe fooleries of mine may view;
But then the bettings muſt be o'er,
Nor *Crab* or *Childers* talk'd of more. F. LEWIS.

147 ——You are of too quick a ſight,
Not to diſcern which way your talent lies.
ROSCOMMON.

148 Me let my father load with chains,
Or baniſh to *Numidia*'s fartheſt plains;
My crime, that I a loyal wife,
In kind compaſſion ſpar'd my huſband's life.
FRANCIS.

149 You wonder now that no man ſees
Such friends as thoſe of ancient *Greece*.
Here lay the point—*Oreſtes*' meat
Was juſt the ſame his friend did eat.
Nor can it yet be found, his wine
Was better, *Pylades*, than thine.
In home-ſpun ruſſet I am dreſt,
Your cloth is always of the beſt.
But honeſt *Marcus*, if you pleaſe
To chooſe me for your *Pylades*,
Remember, words alone are vain;
Love—if you wou'd be lov'd again. F. LEWIS.

150 ——Thou chiefeſt good;
Beſtow'd by Heav'n, but ſeldom underſtood.
ROWE.

Led by our ſtars, what tracts immenſe we trace!
From ſeas remote, what funds of ſcience raiſe!
A pain to thought! but when th' heroic band
Returns applauded to their native land,
A life domeſtic you will then deplore,
And ſigh, while I deſcribe the various ſhore.
E. C.

151 But wrapt in error is the human mind,
And human bliſs is ever inſecure:
Know we what fortune yet remains behind?
Know we how long the preſent ſhall endure?
WEST.

152 Diſaſtrous.

NUMB.

152 Diſaſtrous words can beſt diſaſter ſhow;
In angry phraſe the angry paſſions glow.
EDINB. EDIT.

153 The fickle crowd with fortune comes and goes;
Wealth ſtill finds followers, and misfortune foes.

154 For thee my tuneful accents will I raiſe,
And treat of arts diſclos'd in ancient days;
Once more unlock for thee the ſacred ſpring.
DRYDEN.

155 —— Our barren years are paſt;
Be this of life the firſt, of ſloth the laſt.
EDINB. EDIT.

The gates of *Hell* are open night and day;
Smooth the deſcent, and eaſy is the way:
But, to return, and view the chearful ſkies;
In this, the taſk and mighty labour lies.
DRYDEN.

156 For wiſdom ever echoes nature's voice.

157 Shame greatly hurts or greatly helps mankind.
EDINB. EDIT.

158 —— —— Critics yet contend,
And of their vain diſputings find no end.
FRANCIS.

But from a cloud of ſmoke he breaks to light,
And pours his ſpecious miracles to ſight;
Antiphates his hideous feaſt devours,
Charybdis barks, and *Polyphemus* roars.
FRANCIS.

The man, for wiſdom's various arts renown'd,
Long exercis'd in woes, O muſe! reſound.
Who, when his arms had wrought the deſtin'd fall
Of ſacred *Troy*, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall,
Wand'ring from clime to clime, obſervant ſtray'd,
Their manners noted, and their ſtates ſurvey'd.
On ſtormy ſeas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal ſhore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day;
The god vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah men unbleſs'd) to touch that natal ſhore.
O ſnatch ſome portion of theſe acts from fate,
Celeſtial muſe! and to our world relate. POPE.

159 The

NUMB.

159 The pow'r of words, and ſoothing ſounds appeaſe
The raging pain, and leſſen the diſeaſe. FRANCIS.

160 Beaſts of each kind their fellows ſpare;
Bear lives in amity with bear.

161 Frail as the leaves that quiver on the ſprays,
Like them man flouriſhes, like them decays.

How ſmall to others, but how great to me!
This habitant th' aerial regions boaſt.

162 What old, and rich, and childleſs too,
And yet believe your friends are true?
Truth might perhaps to thoſe belong
To thoſe who lov'd you poor and young;
But truſt me, for the new you have,
They'll love you dearly----in your grave.
F. LEWIS.

163 Bow to no patron's inſolence; rely
On no frail hopes, in freedom live and die.
F. LEWIS.

164 *Gaurus* pretends to *Cato*'s fame;
And proves, by *Cato*'s vice, his claim.

165 Young was I once and poor, now rich and old;
A harder caſe than mine was never told:
Bleſt with the pow'r to uſe them----I had none;
Loaded with *riches* now, the pow'r is gone.
F. LEWIS.

166. Once poor, my friend, ſtill poor you muſt remain,
The rich alone have all the means of gain. E. C.

167 Their nuptial bed may ſmiling concord dreſs,
And *Venus* ſtill the happy union bleſs!
Wrinkled with age, may mutual love and truth
To their dim eyes recall the bloom of youth.
F. LEWIS.

168 The tinſel glitter, and the ſpecious mein,
Delude the moſt; few pry behind the ſcene.

None dares with impious ſteel the grove to rend,
Leſt on himſelf the deſtin'd ſtroke deſcend.

169 No blood from bitten nails, thoſe poems drew;
But churn'd, like ſpittle from the lips they flew.
DRYDEN.

Poliſh'd with endleſs toil, my lays
At length aſpire to *Mantuan* praiſe.

NUMB.

170 I grant the charge; forgive the fault confeſs'd.

171 Dark is the ſun, and loathſome is the day.

172 *Priſcus*, you've often aſk'd me how I'd live,
Shou'd fate at once both wealth and honour give.
What ſoul his future conduct can foreſee?
Tell me what ſort of lion you wou'd be?

F. LEWIS.

Thou haſt not known the giddy whirls of fate,
Nor ſervile flatteries which enchant the great.

Miſs A. W.

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THE RAMBLER.

NUMB. 137. TUESDAY, *July* 9, 1751.

Dum vitant ſtulti vitia, in contraria currunt.
HOR.

THAT wonder is the effect of ignorance, has been often obſerved. The awful ſtilneſs of attention, with which the mind is overſpread at the firſt view of an unexpected effect or uncommon performance, ceaſes when we have leiſure to diſentangle complications and inveſtigate cauſes. Wonder is a pauſe of reaſon, a ſudden ceſſation of the mental progreſs, which laſts only while the underſtanding is fixed upon ſome ſingle Idea; and is at an end when it recovers force enough to divide the object into its parts, or mark the intermediate gradations from the firſt motive to the laſt conſequence.

IT may be remarked with equal truth, that ignorance is often the effect of wonder. It is common for thoſe who have never ac-

cuſtomed themſelves to the labour of enquiry, nor invigorated their confidence by any conqueſts over difficulty, to ſleep in the gloomy quieſcence of aſtoniſhment, without any effort to animate languor or diſpel obſcurity. What they cannot immediately conceive, they conſider as too high to be reached, or too extenſive to be comprehended; They therefore content themſelves with the gaze of ignorance, and forbearing to attempt what they have no hopes of performing, reſign the pleaſure of rational contemplation to more pertinacious ſtudy or more active faculties.

Among the productions of mechanic art, many are of a form ſo different from that of their firſt materials, and many conſiſt of parts ſo numerous and ſo nicely adapted to each other, that it is not poſſible to conſider them without amazement. But when we enter the ſhops of artificers, obſerve the various tools by which every operation is facilitated, and trace the progreſs of a manufacture through the different hands that in ſucceſſion to each other, contribute to its perfection, we ſoon diſcover that every ſingle man has an eaſy taſk, and that the extremes however remote

remote of natural rudeneſs and artificial elegance, are joined by a regular concatenation of effects, of which every one is introduced by that which precedes it, and equally introduces that which is to follow.

THE ſame is the ſtate of intellectual and manual performances. A long calculation or a complex diagram affrights the timorous and unexperienced from a ſecond view; but if we have ſkill ſufficient to analiſe them into ſimple principles, it will generally be diſcovered that our fear was groundleſs. *Divide and conquer*, is a principle equally juſt in ſcience as in policy. Complication is a ſpecies of confederacy, which, while it continues united, bids defiance to the moſt active and vigorous intellect; but of which every member is ſeparately weak, and which may therefore be quickly ſubdued if it can once be broken.

THE chief art of learning, as *Locke* has obſerved, is to attempt but little at a time. The fartheſt excurſions of the mind are made by ſhort flights frequently repeated, the moſt loſty fabricks of ſcience are formed by the

continued accumulation of ſingle propoſitions.

It often happens, whatever be the cauſe, that this impatience of labour or dread of miſcarriage, ſeizes thoſe who are moſt diſtinguiſhed for quickneſs of apprehenſion; and that they who might with greateſt reaſon promiſe themſelves victory, are leaſt willing to hazard the encounter. This diffidence, where the attention is not laid aſleep by lazineſs or diſſipated by pleaſures, can ariſe only from confuſed and general views ſuch as negligence ſnatches in haſte, or from the diſappointment of the firſt hopes formed by arrogance without reflection. To expect that the intricacies of ſcience will be pierced by a careleſs glance, or the eminences of fame aſcended without labour, is to expect a peculiar privilege, a power denied to the reſt of Mankind; but to ſuppoſe that the maze is inſcrutable to diligence, or the heights inacceſſible to preſeverance, is to ſubmit tamely to the tyranny of fancy, and enchain the mind in voluntary ſhackles.

It is the proper ambition of the Heroes in literature to enlarge the boundaries of knowledge

ledge by diſcovering and conquering new regions of the intellectual world. To the ſucceſs of ſuch undertakings perhaps ſome degree of fortuitous happineſs is neceſſary, which no man can promiſe or procure to himſelf; and therefore doubt and irreſolution may be forgiven in him that ventures into the untrodden abyſſes of truth, and attempts to find his way through the fluctuations of uncertainty, and the conflicts of contradiction. But when nothing more is required, than to purſue a path already beaten, and to trample obſtacles which others have demoliſhed, why ſhould any man ſo much ſuſpect his own intellect as to imagine himſelf unequal to the attempt?

It were to be wiſhed that they who devote their lives to ſtudy would at once believe nothing too great for their attainment, and conſider nothing as too little for their regard; that they would extend their notice alike to ſcience and to life, and unite ſome knowledge of the preſent world to their acquaintance with paſt ages and remote events.

Nothing has ſo much expoſed Men of learning to contempt and ridicule, as their ig-

norance of things which are known to all but themſelves, and their inability to conduct common negotiations, or extricate their affairs from trivial perplexities. Thoſe who have been taught to conſider the inſtitutions of the ſchools, as giving the laſt perfection to human abilities, are ſurpriſed to ſee men wrinkled with ſtudy, yet wanting to be inſtructed in the minute circumſtances of propriety, or the neceſſary forms of daily tranſaction; and quickly ſhake off their reverence for modes of education, which they find to produce no ability above the reſt of mankind.

BOOKS, ſays *Bacon*, *can never teach the uſe of books*. The ſtudent muſt learn by commerce with mankind to reduce his ſpeculations to practice, and accommodate his knowledge to the purpoſes of life.

It is too common for thoſe who have been bred to ſcholaſtic profeſſions and paſſed much of their time in academies where nothing but learning confers honours, to diſregard every other qualification, and to imagine tha they ſhall find mankind ready to pay homage

mage to their knowledge, and to croud about them for inſtruction. They, therefore, ſtep out from their cells into the open world, with all the confidence of authority and dignity of importance; they look round about them at once with ignorance and ſcorn on a race of beings to whom they are equally unknown and equally contemptible, but whoſe manners they muſt imitate, and with whoſe opinions they muſt comply, if they deſire to paſs their time happily among them.

To leſſen that diſdain with which ſcholars are inclined to look on the common buſineſs of the world, and the unwillingneſs with which they condeſcend to learn what is not to be found in any ſyſtem of philoſophy, it may be neceſſary to conſider that though admiration is excited by abſtruſe reſearches and remote diſcoveries, we cannot hope to give pleaſure, or to conciliate affection, but by ſofter accompliſhments, and by qualities more eaſily communicable to thoſe about us. He that can only converſe upon queſtions, about which only a ſmall part of mankind has knowledge ſufficient to be curious, muſt

his days in unſocial ſilence, and live in the crowd of life without a companion. He that can only be uſeful in great occaſions, may die without exerting his abilities, and ſtand a helpleſs ſpectator of a thouſand vexations which fret away the happineſs of being, and which nothing is required to remove but a little dexterity of conduct and readineſs of expedients.

No degree of knowledge attainable by man is able to ſet him above the want of hourly aſſiſtance, or to extinguiſh the deſire of fond endearments, and tender officiouſneſs; and therefore, no one ſhould think it unneceſſary to learn thoſe arts by which friendſhip may be gained. Kindneſs is preſerved by a conſtant reciprocation of benefits or interchange of pleaſures; but ſuch benefits only can be beſtowed, as others are capable to receive, and ſuch pleaſures only imparted, as others are qualified to enjoy.

By this deſcent from the pinacles of art no honour will be loſt; for the condeſcenſions of learning are always overpaid by gratitude. An elevated genius employed in little

things,

things, appears, to uſe the ſimile of *Longinus*, like the ſun in his evening declination, he remits his ſplendor but retains his magnitude, and pleaſes more, though he dazzles leſs.

NUMB. 138. SATURDAY, *July* 13, 1751.

——tecum libeat Mihi ſordida rura
Atque humiles habitare caſas, et figere cervos.
VIRG.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH I cannot deny that the contempt with which you have treated the annual migrations of the gay and buſy part of mankind, is juſtified by daily obſervation, ſince moſt of thoſe who leave the town, neither vary their entertainments nor enlarge their notions; yet I ſuppoſe you do not intend to repreſent the practice itſelf as ridiculous, or to declare that he whoſe condition puts the diſtribution of his time into his own power, may not properly divide it between the town and country.

THAT the country, and only the country diſplays the inexhauſtible varieties of nature, and ſupplies the philoſophical mind with matter for admiration and enquiry, never was denied; but my curioſity is very little attracted by the colour of a flower, the anatomy of an inſect, or the the ſtructure of a neſt; my attention is generally employed upon human manners, and I therefore fill up the months of rural leiſure with remarks on thoſe who live within the circle of my notice. If Writers would more frequently viſit thoſe regions of negligence and liberty, they might often diverſify their repreſentations, and multiply their images, for in the country are original characters chiefly to be found. In cities, and yet more in courts, the minute diſcriminations which diſtinguiſh one from another are for the moſt part effaced, the peculiarities of temper and opinion are gradually worn away by promiſcuous converſe, as angular bodies and uneven ſurfaces loſe their points and aſperities by frequent attrition againſt one another, and approach by degrees to uniform rotundity. The prevalence of faſhion, the influence of example, the deſire

of

of applauſe, and the dread of cenſure, obſtruct the natural tendencies of the mind, and check the fancy in in its firſt efforts to break forth into experiments of caprice.

Few inclinations are ſo ſtrong as to grow up into habits, when they muſt ſtruggle with the conſtant oppoſition of ſettled forms and eſtabliſhed cuſtoms. But in the country every man is a ſeparate and independent being; ſolitude flatters irregularity with hopes of ſecrecy; and wealth removed from the mortification of compariſon and the awe of equality, ſwells into contemptuous confidence, and ſets blame and laughter at defiance; the impulſes of nature act unreſtrained, and the diſpoſition dares to ſhew itſelf in its true form, without any diſguiſe of hypocriſy, or decorations of elegance. Every one indulges the full enjoyment of his own choice, and talks and lives with no other view than to pleaſe himſelf, without enquiring how far he deviates from the general practice, or conſidering others as entitled to any account of his ſentiments or actions. If he builds or demoliſhes, opens or encloſes, deluges or drains, it is not his care what may be the

opinion

opinion of thoſe who are ſkilled in perſpective or architecture, it is ſufficient that he has no landlord to control him, and that none has any right to examine in what projects the lord of the manor ſpends his own money on his own grounds?

For this reaſon it is not very common to want ſubjects for rural converſation. Almoſt every man is daily doing ſomething which produces merriment, wonder or reſentment, among his neighbours. This utter exemption from reſtraint leaves every anomalous quality to operate in its full extent, and ſuffers the natural character to diffuſe itſelf to every part of life. The pride which under the check of publick obſervation would have been only vented among ſervants and domeſticks, becomes in a country baronet the torment of a province, and inſtead of terminating in the deſtruction of china ware and glaſſes, ruins tenants, diſpoſſeſſes cottagers, and harraſſes villages with actions of treſpaſs and bills of indictment.

It frequently happens that even without violent paſſions or enormous corruption the freedom

freedom and laxity of a ruſtick life produces remarkable particularities of conduct or manner. In the province where I now reſide, we have one lady eminent for wearing a gown always of the ſame cut and colour; another for ſhaking hands with thoſe that viſit her; and a third for unſhaken reſolution never to let tea or coffee enter her houſe.

But of all the female characters which this place affords, I have found none ſo worthy of attention as that of Mrs. *Buſy*, a widow, who loſt her huſband in her thirtieth year, and has ſince paſſed her time at the manor-houſe, in the government of her children, and the management of the eſtate.

Mrs. *Buſy* was married at eighteen from a boarding-ſchool, where ſhe had paſſed her time like other young ladies in needle-work, with a few intervals of dancing and reading. When ſhe became a bride ſhe ſpent one winter with her huſband in town, where, having no idea of any converſation beyond the formalities of a viſit, ſhe found nothing to engage her paſſions; and when ſhe had been one night at court, and two at an opera, and ſeen

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the Monument, the tombs, and the Tower, ſhe concluded that *London* had nothing more to ſhow, and wondered that when women had once ſeen the world, they could not be content to ſtay at home. She therefore went willingly to the antient ſeat, and for ſome years ſtudied houſewifery under Mr. *Buſy*'s mother, with ſo much aſſiduity, that the old lady, when ſhe died, bequeathed her a caudle-cup, a ſoup-diſh, two beakers, and a cheſt of table linen ſpun by herſelf.

Mr. *Buſy* finding the economical qualities of his lady, reſigned his affairs wholly into her hands, and devoted his life to his pointers and his hounds. He never viſited his eſtates, but to deſtroy the partridges or foxes; and often committed ſuch devaſtations in the rage of pleaſure, that ſome of his tenants refuſed to hold their lands at the uſual rent. Their landlady perſuaded them to be ſatisfied, and entreated her huſband to diſmiſs his dogs, with many exact calculations of the ale drank by his companions, and the corn conſumed by the horſes, and remonſtrances againſt the inſolence of the huntſman, and the frauds of the groom.

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The huntſman was too neceſſary to his happineſs to be diſcarded; and he had ſtill continued to ravage his own eſtate, had he not caught a cold and a fever by ſhooting mallards in the fens. His fever was followed by a conſumption, which in a few months brought him to the grave.

MRS. *Buſy* was too much an economiſt to feel either joy or ſorrow at his death. She received the compliments and conſolations of her neighbours in a dark room, out of which ſhe ſtole privately every night and morning to ſee the cows milked; and after a few days declared that ſhe thought a widow might employ herſelf better than in nurſing grief, and that, for her part, ſhe was reſolved that the fortunes of her children ſhould not be impaired by her neglect.

SHE therefore immediately applied herſelf to the reformation of abuſes. She gave away the dogs, diſcharged the ſervants of the kennel and ſtable, and ſent the horſes to the next fair, but rated at ſo high a price that they returned unſold. She was reſolved to have nothing idle about her, and ordered them to be

be employed in common drudgery. They loſt their ſleekneſs and grace, and were ſoon purchaſed at half the value.

She ſoon diſencumbered herſelf from her weeds, and put on a riding-hood, a coarſe Apron, and ſhort petticoats, and has turned a large manor into a farm, of which ſhe takes the management wholly upon herſelf. She riſes before the ſun to order the horſes to their geers, and ſees them well rubbed down at their return from work; ſhe attends the dairy morning and evening, and watches when a calf falls that it may be carefully nurſed; ſhe walks out among the ſheep at noon, counts the lambs, and obſerves the fences, and, where ſhe finds a gap, ſtops it with a buſh till it can be better mended. In harveſt ſhe rides afield in the Waggon, and is very liberal of her ale from a wooden bottle. At her leiſure hours ſhe looks gooſe eggs, airs the wool room, and turns the cheeſe.

Either reſpect or curioſity ſtill brings viſitants to her houſe, whom ſhe entertains with prognoſticks of a ſcarcity of wheat, or a rot among the ſheep, and whom ſhe always thinks

thinks herſelf privileged to diſmiſs, when ſhe is to ſee the hogs feed, or to count her poultry on the rooſt.

THE only things neglected about her are her children, whom ſhe has taught nothing but the loweſt houſhold duties. In my laſt viſit I met miſs *Buſy* carrying grains to a ſick cow, and was entertained with the accompliſhments of her elder ſon, a youth of ſuch early maturity, that though he is only ſixteen, ſhe can truſt him to ſell corn in the market. Her younger daughter who is eminent for her beauty, though ſomewhat tanned in making hay, was buſy in pouring out ale to the plowmen, that every one might have an equal ſhare.

I COULD not but look with pity on this young family, doomed by the abſurd prudence of their mother to ignorance and meanneſs; but when I recommended a more elegant education, was anſwered, that ſhe never ſaw bookiſh or finical people grow rich, and that ſhe was good for nothing herſelf till ſhe had forgotten the nicety of the boarding-ſchool.

I am,

Yours, &c.

BUCOLUS.

NUMB. 139. TUESDAY, *July* 16, 1751.

——— *Sit quod vis ſimplex duntaxat et unum.*
HOR.

The RAMBLER.

IT is required by *Ariſtotle* to the perfection of a tragedy, and is equally neceſſary to every other ſpecies of regular compoſition, that it ſhould have a beginning, a middle, and an end. "The beginning," ſays he "is "that which has nothing neceſſarily previous "but to which that which follows is naturally "conſequent; the end, on the contrary, is "that which by neceſſity, or, at leaſt, ac-"cording to the common courſe of things, "ſucceeds ſomething elſe, but which implies "nothing conſequent to itſelf; the middle is "connected on one ſide to ſomething that "naturally goes before, and on the other to "ſomething that naturally follows it."

SUCH is the rule laid down by this great critick, for the diſpoſition of the different parts of a well conſtituted fable. It muſt begin

begin, where it may be made intelligible without introduction; and end, where the mind is left in repoſe, without expectation of any farther event. The intermediate paſſages muſt join the laſt effect to the firſt cauſe, by a regular and and unbroken concatenation; nothing muſt be therefore inſerted which does not apparently ariſe from ſomething foregoing, and properly make way for ſomething that ſucceeds it.

THIS Precept is to be underſtood in its rigour, only with reſpect to great and eſſential events, and cannot be extended in the ſame force to minuter circumſtances and uneſſential decorations, which yet are more happy as they contribute more to the main deſign; for it is always a proof of extenſive thought and accurate circumſpection, to promote various purpoſes by the ſame act; and the idea of an ornament admits uſe, though it ſeems to exclude neceſſity.

WHOEVER purpoſes, as it is expreſſed by *Milton*, *to build the lofty rhyme*, muſt acquaint himſelf with this law of poetical architecture, and take care that his edifice be ſolid as well

as beautiful; that nothing ſtand ſingle or independent ſo as that it may be taken away without injuring the reſt; but that from the foundation to the pinnacles one part reſt firm upon another.

THIS regular and conſequential diſtribution, is among common authors frequently neglected; but the failures of thoſe, whoſe example can have no influence, may be ſafely overlooked, nor is it of much uſe to recall obſcure and unregarded names to memory for the ſake of ſporting with their Infamy. But if there is any writer whoſe genius can embelliſh impropriety, and whoſe authority can make error venerable, his works are the proper objects of critical inquiſition. To expunge faults where there are no excellencies, is a taſk equally uſeleſs with that of the chemiſt, who employs the arts of ſeparation and refinement upon ore in which no precious metal is contained to reward his operations.

THE tragedy of *Samſon Agoniſtes* has been celebrated as the ſecond performance of the great author of *Paradiſe loſt*, and oppoſed with all the confidence of triumph to the dramatick per-

performances of other nations. It contains indeed juſt ſentiments, maxims of wiſdom, and oracles of piety, and many paſſages written with the antient ſpirit of choral poetry, in which there is a juſt and pleaſing mixture of *Seneca*'s moral declamation with the wild enthuſiaſm of the *Greek* writers. It is therefore worthy of examination, whether a performance thus illuminated with genius, and enriched with learning, is compoſed according to the indiſpenſable laws of *Ariſtotelian* criticiſm; and, omitting at preſent all other conſiderations, whether it contains a beginning, a middle, and an end;

The beginning is undoubtedly beautiful and proper, opening with a graceful abruptneſs, and proceeding naturally to a mournful recital of facts neceſſary to be known.

Samſon. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To theſe dark ſteps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of ſun and ſhade;
There I am wont to ſit when any chance
Relieves me from my taſk of ſervile toil,
Daily in the common priſon elſe enjoin'd
me.——

—O

—O wherefore was my birth from heav'n
foretold
Twice by an angel? ——
—Why was my breeding order'd and preſcrib'd
As of a perſon ſeparate to God,
Deſign'd for great exploits; if I muſt die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out?
—Whom have I to complain of but myſelf?
Who this high gift of ſtrength, committed to
me,
In what part lodg'd, how eaſily bereft me,
Under the ſeat of ſilence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman muſt reveal it.

His ſoliloquy is interrupted by a chorus or company of men of his own tribe, who condole his miſeries, extenuate his fault, and conclude with a ſolemn vindication of divine juſtice. So that at the concluſion of the firſt act there is no deſign laid, no diſcovery made, nor any diſpoſition formed towards the ſubſequent event.

In the ſecond act *Manoah*, the father of *Samſon*, comes to ſeek his ſon, and, being ſhown him by the chorus, breaks out into lamentations of his miſery, and compariſons

of

of his preſent with his former ſtate, repreſenting to him the ignominy which his religion ſuffers, by the feſtival this day celebrated in honour of *Dagon*, to whom the idolaters aſcribed his overthrow.

——— Thou bear'ſt
Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly haſt thou paid, and ſtill art paying
That rigid ſcore. A worſe thing yet remains,
This day the *Philiſtines* a pop'lar feaſt
Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim
Great pomp and ſacrifice, and praiſes loud
To *Dagon*, as their God, who hath deliver'd
Thee, *Samſon*, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who ſlew'ſt them many a ſlain.

Samſon, touched with this reproach, makes a reply equally penitential and pious, which his father conſiders as the effuſion of prophetick confidence,

Samſon ——————— God be ſure,
Will not connive or linger thus provok'd,
But will ariſe and his great name aſſert:
Dagon muſt ſtoop, and ſhall e'er long receive
Such

Such a diſcomfit, as ſhall quite deſpoil him
Of all theſe boaſted trophies won on me.

Manoah. With cauſe this hope relieves thee, and theſe words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name.

THIS part of the dialogue, as it might tend to animate or exaſperate *Samſon*, cannot, I think, be cenſured as wholly ſuperfluous; but the ſucceeding diſpute, in which *Samſon* contends to die, and which his father breaks off, that he may go to ſollicit his releaſe, is only valuable for its own beauties, and has no tendency to introduce any thing that follows it.

THE next event of the drama is the arrival of *Dalilah*, with all her graces, artifices, and allurements. This produces a dialogue, in a very high degree elegant and inſtructive, from which ſhe retires, after ſhe has exhauſted her perſuaſions, and is no more ſeen or heard of; nor has her viſit any effect but that of raiſing the character of *Samſon*.

In the fourth act enters *Harapha* the giant of *Gath*, whose name had never been mentioned before, and who has now no other motive of coming than to see the man whose strength and actions are so loudly celebrated.

Harapha.]———Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might, and feats perform'd,
Incredible to me; in this displeas'd,
That I was never present in the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each others force in camp or listed fields:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samson challenges him to the combat, and after an interchange of reproaches, elevated by repeated defiance on one side, and imbittered by contemptuous insults on the other, *Harapha* retires; we then hear it determined, by *Samson* and the chorus, that no consequence good or bad will proceed from their interview.

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Chorus. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other farther to afflict thee.

Samson. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise,
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.

AT last, in the fifth act, appears a messenger from the lords assembled at the festival of *Dagon*, with a summons, by which *Samson* is required to come and entertain them with some proof of his strength. *Samson*, after a short expostulation, dismisses him with a firm and resolute refusal, but during the absence of the messenger, having a while defended the propriety of his conduct, he at last declares himself moved by a secret impulse to comply, and utters some dark prefages of a great event to be brought to pass by his agency under the direction of providence.

Samson. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose

To

To ſomething extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this meſſenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be ſure, that may diſhonour
Our law, or ſtain my vow of nazarite,
If there be ought of preſage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By ſome great act, or of my days the laſt.

WHILE *Samſon* is conducted off by the meſſenger, his father returns with hopes of ſucceſs in his ſollicitation, upon which he conſers with the chorus till their dialogue is interrupted, firſt by a ſhout of triumph, and afterwards by ſcreams of horror and agony. As they ſtand deliberating where they ſhall be ſecure, a man who had been preſent at the ſhow enters, and relates how *Samſon* having prevailed on his guide to ſuffer him to lean againſt the main pillars of the theatrical edifice, tore down the roof upon the ſpectators and himſelf.

——— Thoſe two maſſy pillars
With horrible confuſion to and fro,
He tugg'd, he took, till down they came and drew

The whole roof after them, with burſt of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who ſat beneath.——
——*Samſon* with theſe immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the ſame deſtruction on himſelf.

THIS is undoubtedly a juſt and regular cataſtrophe, and the poem, therefore, has a beginning and an end which *Ariſtotle* himſelf could not have diſapproved; but it muſt be allowed to want a middle, ſince nothing paſſes between the firſt act and the laſt, that either haſtens or delays the death of *Samſon*. The whole drama, if its ſuperfluities were cut off, would ſcarcely fill a ſingle act; yet this is the tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry applauded.

The RAMBLER.

NUMB. 140. SATURDAY, *July* 20, 1751.

——*Quis tam*, Lucilî *fautor inepte eſt*
Ut non hoc fateatur. HOR.

IT is common, ſays *Bacon*, to deſire the end without enduring the means. Every member

member of ſociety feels and acknowledges the neceſſity of detecting crimes, yet ſcarce any degree of virtue or reputation is able to ſecure an informer from publick hatred. The learned world has always admitted the uſefulneſs of critical diſquiſitions, yet he that attempts to ſhow, however modeſtly, the failures of a celebrated writer, ſhall ſurely irritate his admirers, and incur the imputation of envy, captiouſneſs, and malignity.

WITH this danger full in my view, I ſhall proceed to examine the ſentiments of *Milton*'s tragedy, which, though much leſs liable to cenſure than the diſpoſition of his plan, are like thoſe of other writers, ſometimes expoſed to juſt exception for want of care, or want of diſcernment.

SENTIMENTS are proper and improper as they conſiſt more or leſs with the character and circumſtances of the perſon to whom they are attributed, with the rules of the compoſition in which they are found, or with the ſettled and unalterable nature of things.

It is common among the tragick poets to introduce their perſons alluding to events or opinions, of which they could not poſſibly have any knowledge. The barbarians of remote or newly diſcovered regions often diſplay their ſkill in *European* learning. The god of love is mentioned in *Tamerlane* with all the familiarity of a *Roman* epigrammatiſt; and a late writer has put *Harvey*'s doctrine of the circulation of the blood into the mouth of a *Turkiſh* ſtateſman, who lived near two centuries before it was known even to philoſophers or anatomiſts.

MILTON's learning, which acquainted him with the manners of the antient eaſtern nations, and his invention, which required no aſſiſtance from the common cant of poetry, have preſerved him from frequent outrages of local or chronological propriety. Yet he has mentioned *Chalybean Steel*, of which it is not very likely that his chorus ſhould have heard, and has made *Alp* the general name of a mountain, in a region where the *Alps* could ſcarcely be known.

No

No medicinal liquor can aſſwage,
Nor breath of cooling air from ſnowy *Alp*.

He has taught *Samſon* the tales of *Circe* and the *Syrens*, at which he apparently hints in his colloquy with *Dalilah*.

I know thy trains,
Tho' dearly to my coſt, thy gins and toils;
Thy fair *enchanted cup*, and *warbling charms*
No more on me have pow'r.

But the groſſeſt error of this kind is the ſolemn introduction of the phœnix in the laſt ſcene, which is faulty, not only as it is incongruous to the perſonage to whom it is aſcribed, but as it is ſo evidently contrary to reaſon and nature, that it ought never to be mentioned but as a fable in any ſerious poem.

——— Virtue giv'n for loſt
Depreſt, and overthrown, as ſeem'd,
Like that ſelf-begotten bird
In the *Arabian* woods emboſt
That no ſecond knows nor third
And lay e'er while a holocauſt,
From out her aſhy womb now teem'd,

Revives, reflouriſhes, then vigorous moſt
When moſt unactive deem'd,
And tho' her body die, her fame ſurvives,
A ſecular bird ages of lives.

ANOTHER ſpecies of impropriety is the unſuitableneſs of thoughts to the general character of the poem. The ſeriouſneſs and ſolemnity of tragedy neceſſarily rejects all pointed or epigrammatical expreſſions, all remote conceits and oppoſition of Ideas. *Samſon*'s complaint is therefore too elaborate to be natural.

As in the land of darkneſs, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a liv'ing death,
And bury'd; but O yet more miſerable!
Myſelf my ſepulchre, a moving grave
Bury'd yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worſt of other evils, pains and wrongs.

ALL alluſions to low and trivial objects with which contempt is uſually aſſociated are doubtleſs unſuitable to a ſpecies of compoſition which ought to be always awful though not always magnificent. The remark therefore

fore of the chorus on good and bad news ſeems to want elevation.

Monoah. A little ſtay will bring ſome notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad ſo great, of bad the ſooner;
For evil news *rides poſt*, while good news *baits*.

But of all meanneſs that has leaſt to plead which is produced by mere verbal conceits, which depending only upon ſounds loſe their exiſtence by the change of a ſyllable. Of this kind is the following dialogue,

Chor. But had we beſt retire? I ſee a *ſtorm*.
Samſ. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempeſt brings.
Samſ. Be leſs abſtruſe, my ridling days are paſt.
Chor. Look now for no inchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his ſtride,
The Giant *Harapha*——

And yet more deſpicable are the lines in which *Manoah*'s paternal kindneſs is commended by the chorus

Fathers are wont to *lay up* for their ſons
Thou for thy ſon are bent to *lay out* all;——

SAMSON's complaint of the inconveniencies of impriſonment is not wholly without verbal quaintneſs.

—— I a priſoner chain'd, ſcarce freely draw
The air impriſoned alſo, cloſe and damp.

From the ſentiments we may properly deſcend to the conſideration of the language, which in imitation of the antients is through the whole dialogue remarkably ſimple and unadorned, ſeldom heightened by epithets, or varied by figures; yet ſometimes metaphors find admiſſion, even where their conſiſtency is not accurately preſerved. Thus *Samſon* confounds loquacity with a ſhipwreck.

How could I once look up, or heave the head

Who

Who like a fooliſh *pilot* have *ſhipwreck'd*
My *veſſel* truſted to me from above,
Gloriouſly *rigg'd*; and for a word, a tear,
Fool, have *divulg'd* the *ſecret gift* of God
To a deceitful woman?——

And the chorus talks of adding fuel to flame in a report.

He's gone, and who knows how he may *report*
Thy *words*, by *adding fuel to the flame?*

The verſification is in the dialogue much more ſmooth and harmonious than in the parts allotted to the chorus, which are often ſo harſh and diſſonant, as ſcarce to preſerve, whether the lines end with or without rhymes, any appearance of metrical regularity,

Or do my eyes miſrepreſent? can this be he
That heroic, that renown'd,
Irreſiſtable *Samſon*; whom unarm'd
No ſtrength of man, or fierceſt wild beaſt could withſtand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid——

SINCE I have thus pointed out the faults of *Milton*, the laws of critical integrity require that I ſhould endeavour to diſplay his excellencies, tho' they will not eaſily be diſcovered in ſhort quotations, becauſe they conſiſt in the juſtneſs of diffuſe reaſonings, or in the contexture and method of continued dialogues; this play having none of theſe deſcriptions, ſimiles, or ſplendid ſentences with which other tragedies are ſo laviſhly adorned.

YET ſome paſſages may be ſelected which ſeem to deſerve particular notice, either as containing ſentiments of paſſion, repreſentations of life, precepts of conduct, or ſallies of imagination. It is not eaſy to give a ſtronger repreſentation of the wearineſs of deſpondency than in the words of *Samſon* to his father.

—— I feel my genial ſpirits droop,
My hopes all flat, nature within me ſeems
In all her functions weary of herſelf;
My race of glory run, and race of ſhame,
And I ſhall ſhortly be with them that reſt.

THE

THE reply of *Samſon* to the flattering *Dalilah* affords a juſt and ſtriking deſcription of the ſtratagems and allurements of feminine hypocriſy.

——— Theſe are thy wonted arts,
And arts of ev'ry woman falſe like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to ſubmit, beſeech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorſe,
Confeſs and promiſe wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her huſband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakneſs which way to aſſail:
Then with more cautious and inſtructed ſkill
Again tranſgreſſes, and again ſubmits.

WHEN *Samſon* has refuſed to make himſelf a ſpectacle at the feaſt of *Dagon*, he firſt juſtifies his behaviour to the chorus, who charge him with having ſerved the *Philiſtines* by a very juſt diſtinction; and then deſtroys the common excuſe of cowardice and ſervility which always confound temptation with compulſion.

Chor.

Chor. Yet with thy ſtrength thou ſerv'ſt the *Philiſtines.*

Samſ. Not in their idol worſhip, but by labour
Honeſt and lawful to deſerve my food
Of thoſe who have me in their civil power.

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Samſ. Where outward force conſtrains, the ſentence holds,
But who conſtrains me to the temple of *Dagon,*
Not dragging? The *Philiſtine* lords command.
Commands are no conſtraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to diſpleaſe
God for the fear of man, and man prefer
Set God behind.

THE complaint of blindneſs which *Samſon* pours out at the beginning of the tragedy is equally addreſſed to the paſſions and the fancy. The enumeration of his miſeries is ſucceeded by a very pleaſing train of poetical images, and concluded by ſuch expoſtulations and wiſhes, as reaſon too often ſubmits to learn from deſpair.

O firſt created beam, and thou great word
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The ſun to me is dark
And ſilent as the noon,
When ſhe deſerts the night
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light ſo neceſſary is to life,
And almoſt life itſelf; if it be true,
That light is in the ſoul,
She all in ev'ry part; why was the ſight
To ſuch a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and ſo eaſy to be quench'd,
And not, as feeling, thro' all parts diffus'd,
That ſhe may look at will thro' ev'ry pore.

SUCH are the faults and ſuch the beauties of *Samſon Agoniſtes*, which I have ſhown with no other purpoſe than to promote the knowledge of true criticiſm. The everlaſting verdure of *Milton*'s laurels, has nothing to fear from the blaſts of malignity; nor can my attempt produce any other effect, than to ſtrengthen their ſhoots by lopping their luxuriance.

NUMB.

NUMB. 141. TUESDAY, *July*, 23, 1751.

Hilariſque, tamen cum pondere, virtus.

STAT.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE politicians have long obſerved that the greateſt events may be often traced back to trivial cauſes. Petty competition or caſual friendſhip, the prudence of a ſlave, or the garrulity of a woman have hindered or promoted the moſt important ſchemes, and haſtened or retarded the revolutions of empire.

WHOEVER ſhall review his life will generally find, that the whole tenor of his conduct has been determined by ſome accident of no apparent moment, or by a combination of inconſiderable circumſtances, acting when his imagination was unoccupied, and his judgment unſettled; and that his principles and actions have taken their colour from ſome ſecret infuſion, mingled without deſign in the current of his ideas. The deſires

that

that predominate in our hearts, are inſtilled by imperceptible communications at the time when we look upon the various ſcenes of the world, and the different employments of men, with the neutrality of inexperience; and we come forth from the nurſery or the ſchool, invariably deſtined to the purſuit of great acquiſitions, or petty accompliſhments.

SUCH was the impulſe by which I have been kept in motion from my earlieſt years. I was born to an inheritance which gave me a claim in my childhood to diſtinction and careſſes, and ſuppoſe therefore that I was accuſtomed to hear applauſes, before they had much influence on my thoughts. The firſt praiſe of which I remember myſelf ſenſible was that of good humour, which, whether I deſerved it or not when it was beſtowed, I have ſince made it my whole buſineſs to propagate and maintain.

WHEN I was ſent to ſchool, the gaiety of my look and the livelineſs of my loquacity ſoon gained me admiſſion to young hearts not yet fortified againſt affection by artifice or intereſt. I was entruſted with every ſtra-

tagem,

tagem, adopted into every party, and aſſociated in every ſport; my company gave alacrity to a frolick, and gladneſs to a holiday. I was indeed ſo much employed in adjuſting or executing ſchemes of diverſion, that I had had no leiſure for my taſks, but was always furniſhed with exerciſes, and inſtructed in my leſſons by ſome kind patron of the higher claſſes. My maſter either not ſuſpecting my deficiency, or unwilling to detect what his kindneſs would not have ſuffered him to puniſh nor his impartiality to excuſe, commonly allowed me to eſcape with a very ſlight examination, laughed at the pertneſs of my ignorance, and the ſprightlineſs of my abſurdities, and could not forbear to ſhow that he regarded me with ſuch tenderneſs, as genius and learning can ſeldom excite.

From ſchool I was at the uſual age diſmiſſed to the univerſity, where I ſoon drew upon me the notice of the younger ſtudents, and was the conſtant partner of their morning walks and evening compotations. I was not indeed much celebrated for literature, but was looked on with indulgence as a man of parts who wanted nothing but the dulneſs

neſs of a ſcholar, and might become eminent, whenever he ſhould condeſcend to labour and attention. My tutor a while reproached me with negligence, and attempted to repreſs my ſallies with the ſuperciliouſneſs of lettered gravity; yet having natural good humour lurking in his heart, he could not long hold out againſt the power of hilarity, but after a few months began to relax the muſcles of diſciplinarian moroſeneſs, received me with ſmiles after an elopement, and, that he might not betray his truſt to his fondneſs, was content to ſpare my diligence by encreaſing his own.

THUS I continued to diſſipate the gloom of collegiate auſterity, to waſte my own life in idleneſs, and lure others from their ſtudies, till the happy hour arrived, when in the regular progreſs of education, I was ſent to *London*. I ſoon diſcovered the town to be the proper element of youth and gaiety. I was quickly diſtinguiſhed as a wit by the ladies, a ſpecies of beings of whom I had only heard at the univerſity, and whom I had no ſooner the happineſs of approaching than

than I devoted all my faculties to the ambition of pleaſing them.

A Wit, Mr. *Rambler*, in the dialect of ladies is not always a man, who by the action of a vigorous fancy upon comprehenſive knowledge, brings diſtant ideas unexpectedly together, who by ſome peculiar acuteneſs diſcovers reſemblances in objects diſſimilar to common eyes, or by mixing heterogeneous notions dazzles the attention with ſudden ſcintillations of conceit. A lady's wit is a man who can make ladies laugh, to which, however eaſy it may ſeem, many gifts of nature, and attainments of art muſt commonly concur. He that hopes to be received as a wit in female aſſemblies ſhould have a form neither ſo amiable as to ſtrike with admiration, nor ſo coarſe as to raiſe diſguſt, with an underſtanding too feeble to be dreaded, and too forcible to be deſpiſed. The other parts of the character are more ſubject to variation; it was formerly eſſential to a wit, that half his back ſhould be covered with a ſnowy fleece, and at a time yet more remote no man was a wit without his boots; in the days of the ſpectator

tor a ſnuff-box ſeems to have been indiſpenſable, but in my time an embroidered coat was ſufficient, without any preciſe regulation of the reſt of his dreſs.

But wigs and boots and ſnuff-boxes are vain without a perpetual reſolution to be merry, and who can always find ſupplies of mirth? *Juvenal* indeed, in his compariſon of the two oppoſite philoſophers, wonders only whence an unexhauſted fountain of tears could be diſcharged; but had *Juvenal*, with all his ſpirit, undertaken my province, he would have found conſtant gaiety equally difficult to be ſupported. Conſider, Mr. *Rambler*, and compaſſionate the condition of a man who has taught every company to expect from him, a continual feaſt of laughter, an unintermitted ſtream of jocularity. The taſk of every other ſlave has an end. The rower in time reaches the port; the lexicographer at laſt finds the concluſion of his alphabet; only the hapleſs wit has his labour always to begin, the call for novelty is never ſatisfied, and one jeſt only raiſes expectation of another.

I KNOW that among men of learning and aſperity the retainers to the female world are not conſidered with much regard; yet I cannot but hope that if you knew at how dear a rate our honours are purchaſed, you would look with ſome gratulation on our ſucceſs, and with ſome pity on our miſcarriages. Think on the miſery of him who is condemned to cultivate barrenneſs, and romage vacuity; who is obliged to continue his talk when his meaning is ſpent, to raiſe merriment without images, to harraſs his imagination in queſt of thoughts which he cannot ſtart, and his memory in purſuit of narratives which he cannot overtake; obſerve the effort with which he ſtrains to conceal deſpondency by a ſmile, and the diſtreſs in which he ſits while the eyes of the company are fixed upon him as their laſt refuge from ſilence and dejection.

IT were endleſs to recount the ſhifts to which I have been reduced, or to enumerate the different ſpecies of artificial wit. I regularly frequented coffee-houſes, and have often lived a week upon an expreſſion, of which

which he who dropped it did not know the value. When fortune did not favour my erratic induſtry, I gleaned jeſts at home from obſolete farces. To collect wit was indeed eaſy, for I conſorted with none that looked much into books, but to diſperſe it was the difficulty. A ſeeming negligence was often uſeful, and I have very ſucceſsfully made a reply not to what the lady had ſaid, but to what it was convenient for me to hear; for very few were ſo perverſe as to rectify a miſtake which had given occaſion to a burſt of merriment. Sometimes I drew the converſation up by degrees to a proper point, and produced a conceit which I had treaſured up, like ſportſmen who boaſt of killing the foxes which they lodge in the covert. Eminence is however in ſome happy moments gained at leſs expence; I have delighted a whole circle at one time with a ſeries of quibbles, and made myſelf good company at another by ſcalding my fingers, or miſtaking a lady's lap for my own chair.

These are artful deceits and uſeful expedients; but expedients are at length exhauſted, and deceits detected. Time itſelf, among

among other injuries, diminiſhes the power of pleaſing, and I now find in my forty fifth year many pranks and pleaſantries very coldly received which have formerly filled a whole room with jollity and acclamation. I am under the melancholy neceſſity of ſupporting that character by ſtudy, which I gained by levity, having learned too late that gaiety muſt be recommended by higher qualities, and that mirth can never pleaſe long but as the efflorescence of a mind loved for its luxuriance, but eſteemed for its uſefulneſs.

I am, &c.

PAPILIUS.

MUMB.

NUMB. 142. SATURDAY, *July*, 27, 1751.

Ενθα δ' ἀνὴρ ἱνίαυε πελώριος---οὐδὲ, μέτ' ἄλλῃς
Πωλεῖτ'· ἀλλ' ἀπάνευθεν ἰὼν ἀθεμίστια πολλὰ
Καὶ γὰρ θᾶνμ' ἐτέτυκτο πελώριον, οὐδὲ ἐώκει
Ανδρι σιτοφάγῳ. HOM.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING been long accuſtomed to retire annually from the town in the ſummer months, I lately accepted the invitation of *Eugenio*, who has an eſtate and ſeat in a diſtant county. As we were unwilling to travel without improvement, we turned often from the direct road to pleaſe ourſelves with the view of nature or of art; we examined every wild mountain and medicinal ſpring, criticiſed every edifice, contemplated every ruin that was to be found on either hand, and compared every ſcene of action with the narratives of hiſtorians. By this ſucceſſion of amuſements we enjoyed the exerciſe of a journey without ſuffering the fatigue, and had nothing to regret but that by a progreſs ſo leiſurely and gentle, we miſſed the adventures of a poſt-chaiſe, and the pleaſure

of alarming villages with the tumult of our paſſage, and of diſguiſing our inſignificancy by the dignity of hurry.

THE firſt week after our arrival at *Eugenio*'s houſe was paſſed in receiving viſits from his neighbours, who crowded about him with all the eagerneſs of benevolence; ſome impatient to learn the news of the Court and town, that they might be qualified by authentick information to dictate to the rural politicians on the next bowling day; others deſirous of his intereſt to accommodate diſputes, or of his advice in the ſettlement of their fortunes and the marriage of their children.

THE civilities which we had received were ſoon to be returned; and I paſſed ſome time with great ſatisfaction in roving through the country, and viewing the ſeats, gardens and plantations which are ſcattered over it. My pleaſure would indeed have been greater had I been ſometimes allowed to wander in a park or wilderneſs alone, but to appear as the friend of *Eugenio* was an honour not to be enjoyed without ſome inconveniences; ſo much

much was every one ſolicitous for my regard, that I could ſeldom eſcape to ſolitude, or ſteal a moment from the emulation of complaiſance, and the vigilance of officiouſneſs.

In theſe rambles of good neighbourhood we frequently paſſed by a houſe of unuſual magnificence, which, while I had my curioſity yet diſtracted among many novelties, did not much attract my obſervation; but in a ſhort time I could not forbear ſurveying it with particular notice; for the length of the wall which encloſed the gardens, the diſpoſition of the ſhades that waved over it, and the canals, of which I could obtain ſome glimpſes through the trees from our own windows, gave me reaſon to expect more grandeur and beauty than I had yet ſeen in that province. I therefore enquired as we rode by it, why we never amongſt our excurſions ſpent an hour where there was ſuch appearance of ſplendor and affluence. *Eugenio* told me that the ſeat which I ſo much admired, was commonly called in the country the *haunted houſe*, and that no viſits were paid there by any of the gentlemen whom I had yet ſeen. As the haunts of incorporeal

beings are generally ruinous, neglected and deſolate, I eaſily conceived that there was ſomething to be explained, and told him that I ſuppoſed it only fairy ground, on which we might venture by day-light without danger. The danger, ſays he, is indeed only that of appearing to ſolicit the acquaintance of a man, with whom it is not poſſible to converſe without infamy, and who has driven from him by his inſolence or malignity every human being who can live without him.

Our converſation was then accidentally interrupted; but my inquiſitive humour being now in motion, could not reſt without a full account of this newly diſcovered prodigy. I was ſoon informed that the fine houſe and ſpacious gardens were haunted by ſquire *Bluſter*, of whom it was very eaſy to learn the character, ſince nobody had regard for him ſufficient to hinder them from telling whatever they could diſcover.

Squire *Bluſter* is deſcended of an antient family. The eſtate which his anceſtors had immemorially poſſeſſed was much augmented

by captain *Bluſter*, who ſerved under *Drake* in the reign of *Elizabeth*; and the *Bluſters* who were before only petty gentlemen, have from that time frequently repreſented the ſhire in parliament, been choſen to preſent addreſſes, and given laws at hunting-matches and races. They were eminently hoſpitable and popular, till the father of this gentleman died of a fever, which he caught in the crowd of an election. His lady went to the grave ſoon after him, and left the heir then only ten years old to the care of his grandmother, who would not ſuffer him to be controlled, becauſe ſhe could not bear to hear him cry; and never ſent him to ſchool, becauſe ſhe was not able to live without his company. She taught him however very early to inſpect the ſteward's accounts, to dog the butler from the cellar, and to catch the ſervants at a junket; ſo that he was at the age of eighteen a complete maſter of all the lower arts of domeſtick policy, had often on the road detected combinations between the coachman and the oſtler, and procured the diſcharge of nineteen maids for illicit correſpondence with cottagers and charwomen.

By the opportunities of parſimony which minority affords, and which the probity of his guardians had diligently improved, a very large ſum of money was accumulated, and he found himſelf when he took his affairs into his own hands the richeſt man in the county. It has been long the cuſtom of this family to celebrate the heir's completion of his twenty-firſt year, by an entertainment, at which the houſe is thrown open to all that are inclined to enter it, and the whole province flocks together as to a general feſtivity. On this occaſion young *Bluſter* exhibited the firſt tokens of his future eminence, by ſhaking his purſe at an old gentleman, who had been the moſt intimate friend of his father, and offering to wager a greater ſum than he could afford to venture; a practice with which he has at one time or other inſulted every freeholder within ten miles round him.

His next acts of offence were committed in a contentious and ſpiteful vindication of the privileges of his manors, and a rigorous and relentleſs proſecution of every man that preſumed to violate his game. As he happens

pens to have no eſtate adjoining equal to his own, his oppreſſions are often born without reſiſtance for fear of a long ſuit, of which he delights to count the expences without the leaſt ſolicitude about the event, for he knows that where nothing but an honorary right is conteſted, the poorer antagoniſt muſt always ſuffer whatever ſhall be the laſt deciſion of the law.

By the ſucceſs of ſome of theſe diſputes, he has ſo elated his inſolence, and by reflection upon the general hatred which they have brought upon him, ſo irritated his virulence, that his whole life is ſpent in meditating or executing miſchief. It is his common practice to procure his hedges to be broken in the night, and then to demand ſatisfaction for damages which his grounds have ſuffered from his neighbour's cattle. An old widow was yeſterday ſoliciting *Eugenia* to enable her to replevin her only cow then in the pound by ſquire *Bluſter*'s order, who had ſent one of his agents to take advantage of her calamity, and perſuade her to ſell the cow at an under rate. He has driven a day labourer from his cottage, for gathering blackberries in a hedge for his children; and has now an

old woman in the county jail for a treſpaſs which ſhe committed, by coming into his grounds to pick up acorns for her hog.

MONEY, in whatever hands, will confer power. Diſtreſs will fly to immediate refuge without much conſideration of remote conſequences. *Bluſter* has therefore a deſpotick authority in many families whom he has aſſiſted on preſſing occaſions with larger ſums than they can eaſily repay. The only viſits that he makes are to theſe houſes of misfortune, where he enters with the inſolence of abſolute command, enjoys the terrors of the family, exacts their obedience, riots at their charge, and in the height of his joy inſults the father with menaces, and the daughters with obſcenity.

HE is of late ſomewhat leſs offenſive; for one of his debtors after gentle expoſtulations by which he was only irritated to groſſer outrage, ſeized him by the ſleeve, led him trembling into the court-yard, and cloſed the door upon him in a ſtormy night. He took his uſual revenge next morning by a writ, but the debt was diſcharged by the aſſiſtance of *Eugenio*.

It is his rule to ſuffer his tenants to owe him rent, becauſe by this indulgence, he ſecures to himſelf the power of ſeizure whenever he has an inclination to amuſe himſelf with calamity, and feaſt his ears with entreaties and lamentations. Yet as he is ſometimes capriciouſly liberal to thoſe whom he happens to adopt as favourites, and lets his lands at a cheap rate, his farms are never long unoccupied; and when one is ruined by oppreſſion, the poſſibility of better fortune quickly lures another to ſupply his place.

Such is the life of ſquire *Bluſter*; a man in whoſe power fortune has liberally placed the means of happineſs, but who has defeated all her gifts of their end by the depravity of his mind. He is wealthy without followers; he is magnificent without witneſſes; he has birth without alliance, and influence without dignity. His neighbours ſcorn him as a brute; his dependents dread him as an oppreſſor, and he has only the gloomy comfort of reflecting, that if he is hated, he is likewiſe feared.

I am, Sir, &c.

VAGULUS.

NUMB. 143. TUESDAY, *July*, 30, 1751.

——*Moveat Cornicula Riſum*
Furtivis nudata Coloribus.—— HOR.

AMONG the innumerable practices by which intereſt or envy have taught thoſe who live upon literary fame to diſturb each other at their airy banquets, one of the moſt common is the charge of plagiariſm. When the excellence of a new compoſition, can no longer be conteſted, and malice is compelled to give way to the unanimity of applauſe, there is yet this one expedient to be tried by which the author may be degraded, though his work be reverenced; and the excellence which we cannot obſcure, may be ſet at ſuch a diſtance as not to overpower our fainter luſtre.

THIS accuſation is dangerous, becauſe, even when it is falſe, it may be ſometimes urged with probability. *Bruyere* declares that we are come into the world too late to produce any thing new, that nature and life are

preoccupied, and that deſcription and ſentiment have been long exhauſted. It is indeed certain that whoever attempts any common topick, will find many unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with thoſe of other writers; nor can the niceſt judgment always diſtinguiſh accidental ſimilitude from artful imitation. There is likewiſe a common ſtock of images, a ſettled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of tranſition, which all authors ſuppoſe themſelves at liberty to uſe, and which produce the reſemblance generally obſervable among contemporaries. So that in books which beſt deſerve the name of originals, there is little new beyond the diſpoſition of materials already provided; the ſame ideas and combinations of ideas have been long in the poſſeſſion of other hands; and by reſtoring to every man his own, as the *Romans* muſt have returned to their cots from the poſſeſſion of the world, ſo the moſt inventive and fertile genius would reduce his folios to a few pages. Yet the author who imitates his predeceſſors only, by furniſhing himſelf with thoughts and elegancies out of the ſame general magazine of literature, can with little more propriety be reproached

proached as a plagiary, than the architect can be cenſured as a mean copier of *Angelo* or *Wren*, becauſe he digs his marble from the ſame quarry, ſquares his ſtones by the ſame art, and unites them in columns of the ſame orders.

MANY ſubjects fall under the conſideration of an author, which being limited by nature can admit only of ſlight and accidental diverſities. All definitions of the ſame thing muſt be nearly the ſame; and deſcriptions, which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, muſt always have in ſome degree that reſemblance to each other which they all have to their object. Different poets deſcribing the ſpring or the ſea would mention the zephyrs and the flowers, the billows and the rocks; reflecting on human life, they would, without any communication of opinions, lament the deceitfulneſs of hope, the fugacity of pleaſure, the fragility of beauty, and the frequency of calamity; and, for palliatives of theſe incurable miſeries, they would concur in recommending kindneſs, temperance, caution and fortitude.

WHEN therefore there are found in *Virgil* and *Horace* two ſimilar paſſages,

Hæ

Hæ tibi erunt artes———
Parcere ſubjectis, et debellare ſuperbos.—VIRG.

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hoſtem. HOR.

It is ſurely not neceſſary to ſuppoſe with a late critick that one is copied from the other, ſince neither *Virgil* nor *Horace* can be ſuppoſed ignorant of the common duties of humanity, and the virtue of moderation in ſucceſs.

CICERO and *Ovid* have on very different occaſions remarked how little of the honour of a victory can belong to the general, when his ſoldiers and his fortune have made their deductions; yet why ſhould *Ovid* be ſuſpected to have owed to *Tully* an obſervation, which perhaps occurs to every man that ſees or hears of military glories.

TULLY obſerves of *Achilles*, that had not *Homer* written, his valour had been without praiſe. *Niſi ilias illa extitiſſet, idem tumulus qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen ejus obruiſſet.* *Horace* tells us with more energy that there

there were brave men before the wars of *Troy*, but they were loſt in oblivion for want of a poet.

Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona
Multi; ſed omnes illachrymabiles
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte, carent quia vate ſacro.

TULLY enquires, in the ſame oration, why, but for fame, we diſturb a ſhort life with ſo many fatigues? *Quid eſt quod in hoc tam exigue vitæ curriculo et tam brevi, tantis nos in laboribus exerceamus? Horace* enquires in the ſame manner,

Quid brevi fortes jaculamur ævo
Multa?

When our life is of ſo ſhort duration, why we form ſuch numerous deſigns. But *Horace*, as well as *Tully*, might diſcover that records are needful to preſerve the memory of actions, and that no records were ſo durable as poems; either might find out that life is ſhort, and that we conſume it in unneceſſary labour.

THERE are other flowers of fiction ſo widely ſcattered and ſo eaſily cropped, that it is

is ſcarcely juſt to tax the uſe of them as an act by which any particular writer is deſpoiled of his garland; for they may be ſaid to have been planted by the antients in the open road of poetry for the accommodation of their ſucceſſors, and to be the right of every one that has art to pluck them without injuring their colours or their fragance. The paſſage of *Orpheus* to hell, with the recovery and ſecond loſs of *Eurydice*, have been deſcribed after *Boetius* by *Pope*, in ſuch a manner as might juſtly leave him ſuſpected of imitation, were not the images ſuch as they might both have derived from more antient writers.

Quæ ſontes agitant metu
Ultrices ſcelerum deæ
Jam mœſtæ lacrimis madent,
Non Ixionium caput
Velox præcipitat reta.

Thy ſtone, O *Syſiphus*, ſtands ſtill,
Ixion reſts upon his wheel,
And the pale ſpectres dance!
The furies ſink upon their iron beds.

Tandem,

Tandem, vincimur, arbiter
Umbrarum, miſerans, ait——
Donemus, comitem viro,
Emtam carmine, conjugem.

He ſung, and hell conſented
To hear the poet's prayer;
Stern *Proſerpine* relented,
And gave him back the fair.

Heu, noctis prope terminos
Orpheus Eurydicen *ſuam*
Vidit, perdidit, occidit.

But ſoon, too ſoon, the lover turns his eyes:
Again ſhe falls, again ſhe dies, ſhe dies!

No writer can be fully convicted of imitation except there is a concurrence of more reſemblances than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the ſame ideas are conjoined without any natural ſeries or neceſſary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied. Thus it can ſcarcely be doubted, that in the firſt of the following paſſages *Pope* remembred *Ovid*, and that in the ſecond he copied *Craſhaw*.

Sæpe

Sæpe pater dixit, ſtudium quid inutile tentas?
Mæonides nullas ipſe reliquit opes——
Sponte ſuâ carmen numeros veniebat ad aptos,
Et quod conabar ſcribere, verſus erat. OV.

I left no calling for this idle trade;
No duty broke, no father diſobey'd;
While yet a child, ere yet a fool to fame,
I liſp'd in numbers, for the numbers came.
POPE.

——This plain floor,
Belive me, reader, can ſay more
Than many a braver marble can,
Here lies a truely honeſt man. CRASHAW.

This modeſt ſtone, what few vain marbles can,
May truly ſay, here lies an honeſt man.
POPE.

CONCEITS, or thoughts not immediately impreſſed by ſenſible objects, or neceſſarily ariſing from the coalition or compariſon of common ſentiments, may be with great juſtice ſuſpected whenever they are found a ſecond time. Thus *Waller* probably owed to *Grotius* an elegant compliment.

Here

Here lies the learned *Savil*'s heir,
So early wiſe, and laſting fair;
That none, except her years they told,
Thought her a child, or thought her old.

WALLER.

Unica lux ſæcli, genitoris gloria, nemo
Quem puerum, nemo credidit eſſe ſenem.

GROT.

AND *Prior* was indebted for a pretty illuſtration to *Alleyne*'s poetical hiſtory of *Henry* the ſeventh.

For nought but light itſelf, itſelf can ſhow,
And only kings can write, what kings can do.

ALLEYNE.

Your muſick's power, your muſick muſt diſcloſe,
For what light is, 'tis only light that ſhows.

PRIOR.

AND with yet more certainty may the ſame writer be cenſured, for endeavouring the clandeſtine appropriation of a thought which he borrowed, ſurely without thinking himſelf diſgraced, from an epigram of *Plato*.

Τῇ Παφίῃ τὸ κάτοπτρον· ἔπει τοίη μὲν ὁρᾶσθαι
Οὐκ ἐθέλω, οἵη δ' ἦν πάρος, οὐ δύναμαι.

Venus take my votive glaſs;
Since I am not what I was;
What from this Day I ſhall be,
Venus let me never ſee.

As not every inſtance of ſimilitude can be conſidered as a proof of imitation, ſo not every imitation ought to be ſtigmatized as plagiariſm. The adoption of a noble ſentiment, or the inſertion of a borrowed ornament may ſometimes diſplay ſo much judgment as will almoſt compenſate for invention; and an inferior genius may without any imputation of ſervility purſue the path of the antients, provided he declines to tread in their footſteps.

NUMB. 144. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 3, 1751.

Daphinidis arcum
Fregiſti et calamos: quæ tu, perverſe Menalca,
Et cum vidiſti puero donata, dolebas;
Et ſi non aliqua nocuiſſes, mortuus eſſes, VIRG.

IT is impoſſible to mingle in any converſation without obſerving the difficulty with which a new name makes its way into the world. The firſt appearance of excellence unites multitudes againſt it; unexpected oppoſition riſes up on every ſide; the celebrated and the obſcure join in the confederacy; ſubtilty furniſhes arms to impudence, and invention leads on credulity.

THE ſtrength and unanimity of this alliance is not eaſily conceived. It might be expected that no man ſhould ſuffer his heart to be enflamed with malice, but by injuries; that none ſhould buſy himſelf in conteſting the pretenſions of another, but where ſome right of his own was involved in the queſtion;

tion; that at leaſt hoſtilities commenced without cauſe, ſhould quickly ceaſe; that the armies of malignity ſhould ſoon diſperſe, when no common intereſt could be found to hold them together; and that the attack upon a riſing character ſhould be left entirely to thoſe who had ſomething to hope or fear from the event.

THE hazards of thoſe that aſpire to eminence would be much diminiſhed if they had none but acknowledged rivals to encounter. Their enemies would then be few, and, what is of yet greater importance, would be known. But what caution is ſufficient to ward off the blows of inviſible aſſailants, or what force can ſtand againſt unintermitted attacks, and a continual ſucceſſion of enemies? Yet ſuch is the ſtate of the world, that no ſooner can any man emerge from the crowd, and fix the eyes of the publick upon him, than he ſtands as a mark to the arrows of lurking calumny, and receives, in the tumult of hoſtility, from diſtant and from nameleſs hands, wounds not always eaſy to be cured.

IT is probable that the onſet againſt the candidates for renown, is originally incited by

by thoſe who imagine themſelves in danger of ſuffering by their ſucceſs; but when war is once declared, volunteers flock to the ſtandard, multitudes follow the camp only for want of employment, and flying ſquadrons are diſperſed to every part, ſo pleaſed with an opportunity of miſchief that they toil without proſpect of praiſe, and pillage without hope of profit.

When any man has endeavoured to deſerve diſtinction, he may be eaſily convinced how long his claim is likely to remain unacknowledged, by wandering for a few days from one place of reſort to another. He will be ſurpriſed to hear himſelf cenſured where he could not expect to have been named; he will find the utmoſt acrimony of malice among thoſe whom he never could have offended, and perhaps may be invited to an aſſociation againſt himſelf, or appealed to as a witneſs of his own infamy.

As there are to be found in the ſervice of envy men of every diverſity of temper and degree of underſtanding, calumny is diffuſed by all arts and methods of propagation.

Nothing

Nothing is too groſs or too refined, too cruel or too trifling to be practiſed; very little regard is had to the rules of honourable hoſtility, but every weapon is accounted lawful; and thoſe that cannot make a thruſt at life are content to keep themſelves in play with petty malevolence, to teaze with feeble blows and impotent diſturbance.

But as the induſtry of obſervation has divided the moſt miſcellaneous and confuſed aſſemblages into proper claſſes, and ranged the inſects of the ſummer, that torment us with their drones or ſtings, by their ſeveral tribes; the perſecutors of merit, notwithſtanding their number, may be likewiſe commodiouſly diſtinguiſhed into roarers, whiſperers, and moderators.

The roarer is an enemy rather terrible than dangerous. He has no other qualifications for a champion of controverſy than a hardened front and ſtrong voice. Having ſeldom ſo much deſire to confute as to ſilence, he depends rather upon vociferation than argument, and has very little care to adjuſt one part of his accuſation to another, to preſerve decency

decency in his language or probability in his narratives. He has always a ſtore of reproachful epithets and contemptuous appellations, ready to be produced as occaſion may require, which by conſtant uſe he pours out with reſiſtleſs volubility. If the wealth of a trader is mentioned, he without heſitation devotes him to bankrupcy; if the beauty and elegance of a lady be commended, he wonders how the town can fall in love with ruſtick deformity; if a new performance of genius happens to be celebrated, he pronounces the writer a hopeleſs ideot, without knowledge of books or life, and without the underſtanding by which it muſt be acquired. His exaggerations are generally without effect upon thoſe whom he compels to hear them; and though it will ſometimes happen that the timorous are awed by his violence, and the credulous miſtake his confidence for knowledge, yet the opinions which he endeavours to ſuppreſs ſoon recover their former ſtrength, as the trees that bend to the tempeſt erect themſelves again when its force is paſt.

THE whiſperer is more dangerous. He eaſily gains attention by a ſoft addreſs, and excites

cites curioſity by an air of importance. As ſecrets are not to be made cheap by promiſcuous publication, he calls a ſelect audience about him, and gratifies their vanity with an appearance of truſt by communicating his intelligence in a low voice. Of the trader he can tell that though he ſeems to manage a very extenſive commerce, talks in high terms of the funds, and has a counting-houſe crowded with clerks and porters, yet his wealth is not equal to his reputation; he has lately ſuffered much by the miſcarriage of an expenſive project, and had a greater ſhare than is publickly acknowledged in the rich ſhip that periſhed by the ſtorm. Of the beauty he has little to ſay, but that they who ſee her in a morning do not diſcover all theſe graces which are admired in the park. Of the writer he affirms with great certainty, that, though the excellence of the work be inconteſtable, he can juſtly claim but a ſmall part of the reputation; that he owed moſt of the ſhining images and elevated ſentiments to the kindneſs of a ſecret friend; and that the accuracy and equality of the ſtile was produced by the ſucceſſive correction of the chief criticks of the age.

As every one is pleaſed with imagining that he knows ſomething not yet commonly divulged, ſecret hiſtory eaſily gains credit; but it is for the moſt part believed only while it circulates in whiſpers, and when once it is openly told is openly confuted.

The moſt pernicious enemy is the man of moderation. Without intereſt in the queſtion, or any motive but honeſt curioſity, this impartial and zealous enquirer after truth, is ready to hear whatever can be urged on either ſide, and always diſpoſed to kind interpretations and favourable opinions. He has heard the trader's affairs reported with great variation, and after a diligent compariſon of the evidence, concludes it probable that the ſplendid ſuperſtructure of buſineſs and credit being originally built upon a narrow baſis, has lately been found to totter; but between dilatory payment and bankrupcy there is a great diſtance; many merchants have ſupported themſelves by expedients for a time, without any final injury to their creditors; what is loſt by one adventure may be recovered by another; and no man, however prudent, can

ſecure

ſecure himſelf againſt the failure of correſpondents. He believes that a young lady pleaſed with admiration, and deſirous to make perfect what is already excellent, may heighten ſome of her charms by artificial improvements, but ſurely moſt of her beauties muſt be genuine, and who can ſay that he is wholly what he endeavours to appear? The author he knows to be a man of diligence, who perhaps does not ſparkle with the fire of *Homer*, but has the judgment to diſcover his own deficiencies, and to ſupply them by the help of others; and in his opinion modeſty is a quality ſo amiable and rare, that it ought to find a patron wherever it appears, and may juſtly be preferred by the publick ſuffrage to petulant wit and oſtentatious literature.

He who thus diſcovers failings with unwillingneſs, and extenuates the Faults which cannot be denied, puts an end at once to doubt or vindication; his hearers repoſe upon his candour and veracity, and admit the charge without allowing the excuſe.

Such are the arts by which the envious, the idle, the peeviſh, and the thoughtleſs ob-

ſtruct that worth which they cannot equal, and by artifices thus eaſy, ſordid, and deteſtable is induſtry defeated, beauty blaſted, and genius depreſſed.

NUMB. 145. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 6, 1751.

Non ſi priores Mæonius tenet
Sedes Homerus, Pindaricæ latent,
Ceæque & Alcæi minaces;
Steſichorique graves Camœnæ. HOR.

IT is allowed by thoſe who have conſidered the conſtitution of ſociety, that vocations and employments of leaſt dignity are of the moſt apparent uſe; that the meaneſt artiſan or manufacturer contributes more to the accommodation of life, than the profound ſcholar and argumentative theoriſt; and that the publick would ſuffer leſs immediate inconvenience from the baniſhment of philoſophers, than from the extinction of any common trade.

SOME

SOME have been ſo forcibly ſtruck with this obſervation, that they have in the firſt warmth of their diſcovery thought it reaſonable to alter the common diſtribution of dignity, and have ventured to condemn mankind of univerſal ingratitude. For if juſtice exacts that thoſe by whom we are moſt benefited ſhould be moſt honoured, what better title can be produced to praiſe and veneration than ſucceſsful labour for the good of others? And what labour can be more uſeful than that which procures to families and Communities thoſe neceſſaries which ſupply the wants of nature, or thoſe conveniencies by which eaſe, ſecurity, and elegance are conferred?

THIS is one of the innumerable theories which the firſt attempt to reduce them into practice certainly deſtroys. If we eſtimate dignity by immediate uſefulneſs, agriculture is undoubtedly the firſt and nobleſt ſcience; yet we ſee the plow driven, the clod broken, the manure ſpread, the ſeeds ſcattered, and the harveſt reaped, by men whom thoſe that feed upon their induſtry will never be perſuaded to admire for their wiſdom, or admit

into the ſame rank with heroes, or with ſages; and who, after all the confeſſions which truth may extort in favour of their occupation, muſt be content to fill up the loweſt claſs of the common-wealth, to form the baſe of the pyramid of ſubordination, and lie buried in obſcurity themſelves while they ſupport all that is ſplendid, conſpicuous, or exalted.

It will be found upon a cloſer inſpection, that this part of the conduct of mankind is by no means contrary to reaſon or equity. Remuneratory honours are proportioned at once to the uſefulneſs and difficulty of performances, and are properly adjuſted by compariſon of the mental and corporeal abilities, which they appear to employ. That work, however neceſſary, which is carried on only by muſcular ſtrength and manual dexterity, is not of equal eſteem in the conſideration of rational beings, with the taſks that exerciſe the intellectual powers, and require the active vigour of imagination, or the gradual and laborious inveſtigations of reaſon.

The merit of all manual occupations ſeems to terminate in the inventor; and ſurely the

the firſt ages cannot be charged with ingratitude; ſince thoſe who civilized barbarians, and taught them how to ſecure themſelves from cold and hunger were numbered amongſt their deities. But theſe arts once diſcovered by philoſophy, and facilitated by experience, are afterwards practiſed with very little aſſiſtance from the faculties of the ſoul; nor is any thing neceſſary to the regular diſcharge of theſe inferior duties, beyond that rude obſervation which the moſt ſluggiſh intellect may practiſe, and that induſtry which the ſtimulations of neceſſity naturally enforce.

YET, though the refuſal of ſtatues and panegyrics to thoſe who employ only their hands and feet in the ſervice of mankind may be eaſily juſtified, I am far from intending to incite the petulance of pride, to juſtify the ſupercilioufneſs of grandeur, or to intercept any part of that tenderneſs and benevolence which by the privilege of their common nature one man may claim from another.

THAT it would be neither wiſe nor equitable to diſcourage the huſbandman, the la-

bourer, the miner, or the ſmith, is eaſily diſcovered and generally granted; but there is another race of beings equally obſcure and equally indigent, who becauſe their uſefulneſs is ſomewhat leſs obvious to vulgar apprehenſions, live unrewarded and die unpitied, and who have been long expoſed to inſult without a defender, and to cenſure without an apologiſt.

THE authors of *London* were formerly computed by *Swift* at ſeveral thouſands, and there is not any reaſon for ſuſpecting that their number has decreaſed. Of theſe only a very few can be ſaid to produce, or endeavour to produce new ideas, to extend any principle of ſcience, or gratify the imagination with any uncommon train of images or contexture of events; the reſt, however laborious, however arrogant, can only be conſidered as the drudges of the pen, the manufacturers of literature, who have ſet up for authors, either with or without a regular initiation, and like other artificers have no other care than to deliver their tale of wares at the ſtated time.

It has been formerly imagined, that he who intends the entertainment or inſtruction of others, muſt feel in himſelf ſome peculiar impulſe of genius; that he muſt watch the happy minute in which this natural fire is excited, in which his mind is elevated with nobler ſentiments, enlightened with clearer views, and invigorated with ſtronger comprehenſion; that he muſt carefully ſelect his thoughts and poliſh his expreſſions; and animate his efforts with the hope of raiſing a monument of learning, which neither time nor envy ſhall be able to deſtroy.

But the authors whom I am now endeavouring to recommend, have been too long *backneyed in the ways of men* to indulge the chimerical ambition of praiſe or immortality; they have ſeldom any claim to the trade of writing but that they have tried ſome other without ſucceſs; they perceive no particular ſummons to compoſition, except the ſound of the clock; they have no other rule than the law or the faſhion for admitting their thoughts or rejecting them; and about the opinion of poſterity they have little ſolicitude, for their productions are ſel-

dom intended to remain in the world longer than a week.

THAT ſuch authors are not to be rewarded with praiſe is evident, ſince nothing can be admired when it ceaſes to exiſt; but ſurely though they cannot aſpire to honour, they may be exempted from ignominy, and adopted into that order of men which deſerves our kindneſs though not our reverence. Theſe papers of the day, the *Ephemeræ* of learning, have uſes often more adequate to the purpoſes of common life than more pompous and durable volumes. If it is neceſſary for every man to be more acquainted with his contemporaries than with paſt generations, and to know the events which may immediately affect his fortune or his quiet, rather than the revolutions of antient kingdoms, in which he has neither poſſeſſions nor expectations; if it be pleaſing to hear of the preferment and diſmiſſion of ſtateſmen, the birth of heirs, and the marriage of beauties, the humble author of journals and gazettes, muſt be conſidered as a liberal diſpenſer of beneficial knowledge.

EVEN

EVEN the abridger, compiler and tranſlator, though their labours cannot be ranked with thoſe of the diurnal hiſtoriographer, yet muſt not be raſhly doomed to annihilation. Every ſize of readers requires a genius correſpondent to their capacity; ſome delight in abſtracts and epitomes becauſe they want room in their memory for long details, and content themſelves with effects, without enquiry after cauſes; ſome minds are overpowered by ſplendor of ſentiment, as ſome eyes are offended by a glaring light, and will gladly contemplate an author in an humble imitation, as we look without pain upon the ſun in the water.

As every writer has his uſe, every writer ought to have his patrons; and ſince no man, however high he may now ſtand, can be certain that he ſhall not be ſoon thrown down from his elevation by criticiſm or caprice, the common intereſt of learning requires that her ſons ſhould ceaſe from inteſtine hoſtilities, and inſtead of ſacrificing each other to malice and contempt, endeavour to

avert

avert perſecution from the meaneſt of their fraternity.

NUMB. 146. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 10, 1751.

Sunt illic duo, treſve, qui revolvant
Noſtrarum tineas ineptiarum:
Sed cum ſponſio, fabulæque laſſæ
De Scorpo fuerint et Incitato. MART.

NONE of the projects or deſigns which exerciſe the mind of man, are equally ſubject to obſtructions and diſappointments with the purſuit of fame. Riches cannot eaſily be denied to them who have ſomething of greater value to offer in exchange; he whoſe fortune is endangered by litigation, will not refuſe to augment the wealth of the lawyer; he whoſe days are darkened by languor, or whoſe nerves are excruciated by pain, is compelled to pay tribute to the ſcience of healing. But praiſe may be always omitted without inconvenience. When once a man has made celebrity neceſſary to his hap-

happineſs, he has put it in the power of the weakeſt and moſt timorous malignity, if not to take away his ſatisfaction, at leaſt to withhold it. His enemies may indulge their pride by airy negligence, and gratify their malice by quiet neutrality. They that could never have injured a character by invectives may combine to annihilate it by ſilence; as the women of *Rome* threatened to put an end to conqueſt and dominion, by ſupplying no children to the commonwealth.

When a writer has with long toil produced a work intended to burſt upon mankind with unexpected luſtre, and withdraw the attention of the learned world from every other controverſy or enquiry, he is ſeldom contented to wait long without the enjoyment of his new praiſes. With an imagination full of his own importance, he walks out like a monarch in diſguiſe, to learn the various opinions of his readers. Prepared to feaſt upon admiration; compoſed to encounter cenſures without emotion; and determined not to ſuffer his quiet to be injured by a ſenſibility too exquiſite of praiſe or blame, but to laugh with equal contempt at trivial

trivial objections and injudicious commendations, he enters the places of mingled converſation, ſits down to his tea in an obſcure corner, and while he appears to examine a file of antiquated journals catches the converſation of the whole room. He liſtens, but hears no mention of his book, and therefore ſuppoſes that he has diſappointed his curioſity by delay, and that as men of learning would naturally begin their converſation with ſuch a wonderful novelty, they had digreſſed to other ſubjects before his arrival. The company diſperſes, and their places are ſupplied by others equally ignorant, or equally careleſs. The ſame expectation hurries him to another place, from which the ſame diſappointment drives him ſoon away. His impatience then grows violent and tumultuous; he ranges over the town with reſtleſs curioſity, and hears in one quarter of a cricket-match, in another of a pick-pcket; is told by ſome of an unexpected bankrupcy, by others of a turtle feaſt; is ſometimes provoked by importunate enquiries after the white bear, and ſometimes with praiſes of the dancing dog; he is afterwards entreated to give his judgment upon a wager about the height

height of the monument; invited to ſee a foot race in the adjacent villages; deſired to read a ludicrous advertiſement; or conſulted about the moſt effectual method of making enquiry after a favourite cat. The whole world is buſied in affairs, which he thinks below the notice of reaſonable creatures, and which are nevertheleſs ſufficient to withdraw all regard from his labours and his merits.

He reſolves at laſt to violate his own modeſty, and to recal the talkers from their folly by an enquiry after himſelf. He finds every one provided with an anſwer; one has ſeen the work advertiſed, but never met with any that had read it; another has been ſo often impoſed upon by ſpecious titles, that he never buys a book till its character is eſtabliſhed; a third wonders what any man can hope to produce after ſo many writers of greater eminence; the next has enquired after the author, but can hear no account of him, and therefore ſuſpects the name to be fictitious; and another knows him to be a man condemned by indigence to write too frequently what he does not underſtand.

Many

MANY are the conſolations with which the unhappy author endeavours to allay his vexation, and fortify his patience. He has written with too little indulgence to the underſtanding of common readers; he has fallen upon an age without taſte or curioſity, in which all regard to ſolid knowledge, and ſenſe of delicate refinement, have given way to low merriment and idle buffoonry, and therefore no writer can hope for diſtinction, who has any higher purpoſe than to raiſe laughter. He finds that his enemies, ſuch as apparent ſuperiority will always raiſe, have been induſtrious, while his performance was in the preſs, to vilify and blaſt it; and that the bookſeller, whom he had reſolved to enrich, has rivals in his profeſſion, that maliciouſly obſtruct the circulation of his copies. He at laſt repoſes upon the conſideration, that the nobleſt works of learning and genius have always made their way ſlowly againſt ignorance and prejudice; and that reputation which is never to be loſt muſt muſt be gradually obtained, as animals of longeſt life are obſerved not ſoon to attain their full ſtature and ſtrength.

By ſuch arts of voluntary deluſion does every man endeavour to conceal his own unimportance from himſelf. It is long before we are convinced of the ſmall proportion which every individual bears to the collective body of mankind; or learn how few can be intereſted in the fortune of any ſingle man; how little vacancy is left in the world for any new object of attention; to how ſmall extent the brighteſt blaze of merit can be ſpread amidſt the miſts of buſineſs and of folly; and how ſoon it is always clouded by the intervention of other novelties. Not only the writer of books, but the commander of armies, and the deliverer of nations will eaſily outlive all noiſy and popular reputation: he may be celebrated for a time by the public voice, but his actions and his name will ſoon be conſidered as remote and unaffecting, and will be rarely mentioned but by thoſe whoſe alliance or dependance gives them ſome vanity to gratify by frequent commemoration.

It ſeems not to be ſufficiently conſidered how little renown can be admitted in the world.

world. Mankind are kept perpetually buſy by their fears or deſires, and have not more leiſure from their own affairs, than to acquaint themſelves with the accidents of the current day. Engaged in contriving ſome refuge from calamity, or in ſhortening the way to ſome new poſſeſſion, they ſeldom ſuffer their thoughts to wander to the paſt or future; none but a few ſolitary ſtudents have leiſure to enquire into the claims of heroes or ſages; removed from the notice of the preſent age, and names which hoped to range over kingdoms and continents ſhrink at laſt into cloyſters or colleges.

Nor is it certain, that even of theſe dark and narrow habitations, theſe laſt retreats of fame, the poſſeſſion will be long kept. Of men devoted to literature very few extend their views beyond ſome particular ſcience, and the greater part ſeldom enquire, even in their own profeſſion, for any authors but thoſe whom the preſent mode of ſtudy happens to force upon their notice; they deſire not to fill their minds with unfaſhionable knowledge, but embrace the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem, and contentedly reſign to oblivion thoſe books

books which they now find cenſured or neglected.

THE hope of fame, which almoſt every man indulges who gives his name to the public, is neceſſarily connected with ſuch conſiderations as muſt abate the ardour of confidence, and repreſs the vigour of purſuit. Whoever claims renown from any kind of excellence, expects to fill the place which is now poſſeſſed by another, for there are already names of every claſs ſufficient to employ all that will deſire to remember them; and ſurely he that is puſhing his predeceſſors into the gulph of obſcurity, cannot but ſometimes ſuſpect, that he muſt himſelf give way in like manner, and as he ſtands upon the ſame precipice, be ſwept away with the ſame violence.

IT ſometimes happens, that fame begins when life is at an end; but far the greater number of candidates for applauſe have owed their reception in the world to ſome favourable caſualties, and have therefore immediately ſunk into neglect, when death ſtripped them of their caſual influence, and neither fortune

fortune nor patronage operated in their favour. Among thoſe who have better claims to regard, the honour paid to their memory is commonly proportionate to the reputation which they enjoyed in their lives, though ſtill growing fainter, as it is at a greater diſtance from the firſt emiſſion; and ſince it is ſo difficult to obtain the notice of contemporaries, how little is to be hoped from future times? What can merit effect by its own force, when the help of art or friendſhip can ſcarcely ſupport it?

NUMB. 147. TUESDAY, *Auguſt* 13, 1751.

Tu nihil invitâ dices faciesve Minervâ

HOR.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS little things grow great by continual accumulation, I hope you will not think the dignity of your character impaired by an account of a ludicrous perſecution, which though it produces no ſcenes of horror or of ruin, yet by inceſſant importunity of vexa-

vexation, wears away the happineſs of many of your readers, and conſumes thoſe juvenile years which nature ſeems particularly to have aſſigned to chearfulneſs, in ſilent anxiety and helpleſs reſentment.

I AM the eldeſt ſon of a gentleman, who having inherited a large eſtate from his anceſtors, and feeling no very ſtrong deſire either to encreaſe or leſſen it, has from the time of his marriage generally reſided at his own ſeat, where by dividing his time among the duties of a father, a maſter, and a magiſtrate, the ſtudy of literature, and the offices of civility, he finds means to rid himſelf of the day, without any of thoſe amuſements, which all thoſe with whom my reſidence in this place has made me acquainted think neceſſary to lighten the burthen of exiſtence.

WHEN my age made me capable of inſtruction, my father prevailed upon a gentleman, long known at *Oxford* for the extent of his learning and purity of his manners, to undertake my education. The regard with which I ſaw him treated, diſpoſed me to conſider his inſtructions as too important to be neglected, and

and I therefore ſoon formed a habit of attention, by which I made very quick advances in different kinds of learning, and heard, perhaps too often, very flattering compariſons of my own proficiency with that of others either leſs docile by nature, or leſs happily forwarded by inſtruction. I was careſſed and applauded by all that exchanged viſits with my father, and as young men are with little difficulty taught to judge favourably of themſelves, began to think that cloſe application was no longer neceſſary, and that the time was now come when I was at liberty to read only for amuſement, and was to receive the reward of my fatigues in praiſe and admiration.

While I was thus banquetting upon my own perfections, and longing in ſecret for an opportunity to eſcape from the ſuperintendance of my tutor, my father's brother came from *London* to paſs a ſummer at his native place. A lucrative employment which he poſſeſſed, and a fondneſs for the converſation and diverſions of the gay part of mankind, had ſo long kept him from rural excurſions, that I had never ſeen him ſince my infancy. My curioſity

curioſity was therefore ſtrongly excited by the hope of obſerving a character more nearly, which I had hitherto reverenced only at a diſtance.

FROM all private and intimate converſation I was long witheld by the perpetual confluence of viſitants, with whom the firſt news of my uncle's arrival crouded the houſe; but was amply recompenſed by ſeeing an exact and punctilious practice of the arts of a courtier, in all the ſtratagems of endearment, the gradations of reſpect, and variations of courteſy. I remarked with what juſtice of diſtribution he divided his talk to a wide circle; with what addreſs he offered every man an occaſion of indulging ſome favourite topick, or diſplaying ſome particular attainment; the judgment with which he regulated his enquiries after the abſent; and the care with which he ſhewed all the companions of his early years how ſtrongly they were infixed in his memory, by the mention of paſt incidents, and the recital of puerile kindneſſes dangers and frolicks. I ſoon diſcovered that he poſſeſſed ſome ſcience of graciouſneſs and attraction which books had not taught, and of which

which neither I nor my father had any knowledge; that he had the power of obliging thoſe whom he did not benefit; that he diffuſed upon his curſory behaviour and moſt trifling actions a gloſs of ſoftneſs and delicacy by which every one was dazzled; and that by ſome occult method of captivation, he animated the timorous, ſoftened the ſupercilious, and opened the reſerved. I could not but repine at the inelegance of my own manners which left me no hopes but not to offend, and at the inefficacy of ruſtick benevolence which gained no friends but by real ſervice.

My uncle ſaw the veneration with which I caught every accent of his voice, and watched every motion of his hand; and the aukward diligence with which I endeavoured to imitate his embrace of fondneſs, and his bow of reſpect. He was like others eaſily flattered by an imitator by whom he could not fear ever to be rivalled, and repaid my aſſiduities with compliments and profeſſions. Our fondneſs was ſo encreaſed by a mutual endeavour to pleaſe each other, that when he returned to *London*, he declared himſelf unable

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to leave a nephew ſo amiable and ſo accompliſhed behind him; and obtained my father's permiſſion to enjoy my company for a few months, by a promiſe to initiate me in the arts of politeneſs, and introduce me into publick life.

The courtier had little inclination to fatigue, and therefore by travelling very ſlowly, afforded me time for more looſe and familiar converſation; but I ſoon found that by a few enquiries which he was not well prepared to ſatisfy I had made him weary of his young companion. His element was a mixed aſſembly, where ceremony and healths, compliments and common topicks kept the tongue employed with very little aſſiſtance from memory or reflection; but in the chariot, where he was neceſſitated to ſupport a regular tenor of converſation, without any relief from a new commer, or any power of ſtarting into gay digreſſions or deſtroying argument by a jeſt, he ſoon diſcovered that poverty of ideas which had been hitherto concealed under the tinſel of politeneſs. The firſt day he entertained me with the novelties and wonders with which I ſhould be aſto-

niſhed at my entrance into *London*, and cautioned me with apparent admiration of his own wiſdom againſt the arts by which ruſticity is frequently deluded. The ſame detail and the ſame advice he would have repeated on the ſecond day; but as I every moment diverted the diſcourſe to the hiſtory of the towns by which we paſſed, or ſome other ſubject of learning or of reaſon, he ſoon loſt his vivacity, grew peeviſh and ſilent, wrapped his cloak about him, compoſed himſelf to ſlumber, and reſerved his gaiety for fitter auditors.

At length I entered *London*, and my uncle was reinſtated in his ſuperiority. He awaked at once to loquacity as ſoon as our wheels rattled on the pavement, and told me the name of every ſtreet as we croſſed it, and owner of every houſe as we paſſed by. He preſented me to my aunt, a lady of great eminence for the number of her acquaintances, and ſplendor of her aſſemblies, and either in kindneſs or revenge conſulted with her in my preſence, how I might be moſt advantageouſly dreſſed for my firſt appearance, and moſt expeditiouſly diſencumbered

from

from my villatick baſhfulneſs. My indignation at familiarity thus contemptuous flaſhed in my face; they miſtook anger for ſhame, and alternately exerted their eloquence upon the benefits of publick education, and the happineſs of an aſſurance early acquired.

ASSURANCE is indeed the only qualification to which they ſeem to have annexed merit, and aſſurance therefore is perpetually recommended to me as the ſupply of every defect, and the ornament of every excellence. I never ſit ſilent in company when ſecret hiſtory is circulating, but I am reproached for want of aſſurance. If I fail to return the ſtated anſwer to a compliment; if I am diſconcerted by unexpected raillery; if I bluſh when I am diſcovered gazing on a beauty, or heſitate when I find myſelf embarraſſed in an argument; if I am unwilling to talk of what I do not underſtand, or timorous in undertaking offices which I cannot gracefully perform; if I ſuffer a more lively tatler to recount the caſualities of a game, or a nimbler fop to pick up a fan, I am cenſured between pity and contempt, as a wretch doomed to grovel in obſcurity for want of aſſurance.

I HAVE found many young perſons harraſſed in the ſame manner by thoſe to whom age has given nothing but the aſſurance which they recommend; and therefore cannot but think it uſeful to inform them, that cowardice and delicacy are not to be confounded, and that he whoſe ſtupidity has armed him againſt the ſhafts of ridicule will always act and ſpeak with greater audacity than they whoſe ſenſibility repreſſes their ardor, and who dare never let their confidence outgrow their abilities.

NUMB. 148. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 17, 1751.

Me pater ſævis oneret catenis
Quod vire clemens miſero peperci,
Me vel extremis Numidarum in oris
Claſſe releget. HOR.

POLITICIANS remark that no oppreſſion is ſo heavy or laſting as that which is inflicted by the perverſion and exorbitance of legal authority. The robber may be ſeized,

zed, and the invader repelled wherever they are found; they who pretend no right but that of force, may by force be punished or suppressed. But when plunder bears the name of impost, and murder is perpetrated by a judicial sentence, fortitude is intimidated and wisdom confounded; resistance shrinks from an alliance with rebellion, and the villain remains secure in the robes of the magistrate.

EQUALLY dangerous and equally detestable are the cruelties often exercised in private families, under the venerable sanction of parental authority; the power which we are taught to honour from the first moments of reason; which is guarded from insult and violation by all that can impress awe upon the mind of man; and which therefore may wanton in cruelty without controul, and trample the bounds of right with innumerable transgressions, before duty and piety will dare to seek redress, or think themselves at liberty to recur to any other means of deliverance than supplications by which insolence is elated, and tears by which cruelty is gratified.

It was for a long time imagined by the *Romans*, that no ſon could be the murderer of his father, and they had therefore no puniſhment appropriated to parricide. They ſeem likewiſe to have believed with equal confidence that no father could be cruel to his child, and therefore they allowed every man the ſupreme judicature in his own houſe, and put the lives of his offspring into his hands. But experience informed them by degrees, that they had determined too haſtily in favour of human nature; they found that inſtinct and habit were not able to contend with avarice or malice; that the neareſt relation might be violated; and that power to whomſoever entruſted, might be ill employed. They were therefore obliged to ſupply and to change their Inſtitutions; to deter the parricide by a new law, and to transfer capital puniſhments from the parent to the magiſtrate.

There are indeed many houſes which it is impoſſible to enter familiarly, without diſcovering that parents are by no means exempt from the intoxications of dominion; and

and that he who is in no danger of hearing remonſtrances but from his own conſcience, will ſeldom be long without the art of controlling his convictions, and modifying juſtice by his own will.

If in any ſituation the heart were inacceſſible to malignity, it might be ſuppoſed to be ſufficiently ſecured by parental relation. To have voluntarily become to any being the occaſion of its exiſtence produces an obligation to make that exiſtence happy. To ſee helpleſs infancy ſtretching out her hands and pouring out her cries in teſtimony of dependance, without any powers to alarm jealouſy, or any guilt to alienate affection, muſt ſurely awaken tenderneſs in every human mind; and tenderneſs once excited will be hourly encreaſed by the natural contagion of felicity, by the repercuſſion of communicated pleaſure, and the conſciouſneſs of the dignity of benefaction. I believe no generous or benevolent man can ſee the vileſt animal courting his regard and ſhrinking at his anger, playing his gambols of delight before him, calling on him in diſtreſs, and flying to him in danger, without more kindneſs

than he can perſuade himſelf to feel for the wild and unſocial inhabitants of the air and water. We naturally endear to ourſelves thoſe to whom we impart any kind of pleaſure, becauſe we imagine their affection and eſteem ſecured to us by the benefits which they receive.

THERE is indeed another method by which the pride of ſuperiority may be likewiſe gratified. He that has extinguiſhed all the ſenſations of humanity, and has no longer any ſatisfaction in the reflection that he is loved as the diſtributer of happineſs, may pleaſe himſelf with exciting terror as the inflicter of miſery; he may delight his ſolitude with contemplating the extent of his power and the force of his commands, in imagining the deſires that flutter on the tongue which is forbidden to utter them, or the diſcontent which preys on the heart in which fear confines it; he may amuſe himſelf with new contrivances of detection, multiplications of prohibition, and varieties of puniſhment; and ſwell with exultation when he conſiders how little of the homage that he receives he owes to choice.

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THAT princes of this character have been known the history of all absolute kingdoms will inform us; and since, as *Aristotle* observes, ἡ δικονομικὴ μοναρχία, *the government of a family is naturally monarchical*, it is like other monarchies too often arbitrarily administered. The regal and parental tyrant differ only in the extent of their dominions, and the number of their slaves. The same passions cause the same miseries; except that seldom any prince however despotick, has so far shaken off all awe of the publick eye as to venture upon those freaks of injustice, which are sometimes indulged under the secrecy of a private dwelling. Capricious injunctions, partial decisions, unequal allotments, distributions of reward not by merit but by fancy, and punishments regulated not by the degree of the offence but by the humour of the judge, are too frequent where no power is known but that of a father.

THAT he delights in the misery of others no man will confess, and yet what other motive can make a father cruel? the king may be instigated by one man to the destruction

of another; he may ſometimes think himſelf endangered by the virtues of a ſubject; he may dread the ſucceſsful general or the popular orator; his avarice may point out golden confiſcations; and his guilt may whiſper that he can only be ſecure, by cutting off all power of revenge.

But what can a parent hope from the oppreſſion of thoſe who were born to his protection, of thoſe who can diſturb him with no competition, who can enrich him with no ſpoils? Why cowards are cruel may be eaſily diſcovered; but for what reaſon not more infamous than cowardice can that man delight in oppreſſion who has nothing to fear?

The unjuſtifiable ſeverity of a parent is loaded with this aggravation, that thoſe whom he injures are always in his ſight. The injuſtice of a prince is often exerciſed upon thoſe of whom he never had any perſonal or particular knowledge; and the ſentence which he pronounces, whether of baniſhment impriſonment or death, removes from his view the man whom he condemns. But the domeſtick oppreſſor dooms himſelf to

gaze

gaze upon thoſe faces which he clouds with terror and with ſorrow; and beholds every moment the effects of his own barbarities. He that can bear to give continual pain to thoſe who ſurround him, and can walk with ſatisfaction in the gloom of his own preſence; he that can ſee ſubmiſſive miſery without relenting, and meet without emotion the eye that implores mercy, or demands juſtice, will ſcarcely be amended by remonſtrance or admonition; he has found means of ſtopping the avenues of tenderneſs, and arming his heart againſt the force of reaſon.

Even though no conſideration ſhould be paid to the great law of ſocial beings, by which every individual is commanded to conſult the happineſs of others, yet the harſh parent is leſs to be vindicated than any other criminal, becauſe he leſs provides for the happineſs of himſelf. Every man however little he loves others would willingly be loved; every man hopes to live long, and therefore hopes for that time at which he ſhall ſink back to imbecillity, and muſt depend for eaſe and chearfulneſs upon the officiouſneſs of others. But how has he obviated the

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inconveniencies of old age, who alienates from him the aſſiſtance of his children, and whoſe bed muſt be ſurrounded in his laſt hours, in the hours of languor and dejection of impatience and of pain, by ſtrangers to whom his life is indifferent, or by enemies to whom his death is deſirable.

PIETY will indeed in good minds overcome reſentment, and thoſe who have been harraſſed by brutality will forget the injuries which they have ſuffered ſo far as to perform the laſt duties with alacrity and zeal. But ſurely no reſentment can be equally painful with kindneſs thus undeſerved, nor can ſeverer puniſhment be imprecated upon a man not wholly loſt in meanneſs and ſtupidity, than through the tediouſneſs of decrepitude, to be reproached by the kindneſs of his own children, to receive not the tribute but the alms of attendance, and to owe every relief of his miſeries not to gratitude but to mercy.

NUMB. 149. TUESDAY, *August* 20, 1751.

Quod non ſit Pylades hoc tempore, non ſit Oreſtes
Miraris? Pylades, Marce, bibebat idem.
Nec melior panis, turduſve dabatur Oreſti:
Sed par, atque eadem cœna duobus erat.—
Te Cadmæa Tyros, me pinguis Gallia veſtit?
Vis te purpureum, Marce, ſagatus amem?
Ut præſtem Pyladen, [illegible] mihi præſtet Oreſtem:
Hoc non ſit verbis: Marce, ut ameris, ama.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

NO depravity of the mind has been more frequently or juſtly cenſured than ingratitude. There is indeed ſufficient reaſon for looking on thoſe that can return evil for good, and repay kindneſs and aſſiſtance with hatred or neglect, as corrupted beyond the common degrees of wickedneſs; nor will he who has once been clearly detected in acts of injury to his benefactor, deſerve to be numbered among ſocial beings; he has endeavoured to deſtroy confidence, to intercept ſym-

ſympathy, and to turn every man's attention wholly on himſelf.

THERE is always danger leſt the honeſt abhorrence of a crime ſhould raiſe the paſſions with too much violence againſt the man to whom it is imputed. In proportion as guilt is more enormous, it ought to be aſcertained by ſtronger evidence. The charge againſt ingratitude is very [illegible]; almoſt every man can tell what favours he has conferred upon inſenſibility, and how much happineſs he has beſtowed without return; but perhaps if theſe patrons and protectors were confronted with any whom they boaſt of having befriended, it would often appear that they over-rate their benevolence, that they conſulted only their pleaſure or vanity, and repaid themſelves their petty donatives by gratifications of inſolence and indulgence of contempt.

IT has happened that much of my time has been paſſed in a dependant ſtate, and conſequently I have received many favours in the opinion of thoſe at whoſe expence I have been maintained; yet I do not feel in

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in my heart any burning gratitude or tumultuous affection; and as I would not willingly ſuppoſe myſelf leſs ſuſceptible of virtuous paſſions than the reſt of mankind, I ſhall lay the hiſtory of my life before you, that you may by your judgment of my conduct, either reform or confirm my preſent ſentiments.

My father was the ſecond ſon of a very antient and wealthy family. He married a lady of equal birth, whoſe fortune, joined to his own, might have ſupported him and his poſterity in honour and plenty; but being gay and ambitious, he prevailed on his friends, to procure him a poſt, which gave him opportunity of diſplaying in publick his elegance and politeneſs. My mother was equally pleaſed with ſplendor, and equally careleſs of expence; they both juſtified their profuſion to themſelves, by endeavouring to believe it neceſſary to the extenſion of their acquaintance and improvement of their intereſt; and whenever any place became vacant, they expected to be repaid by diſtinction and advancement. In the midſt of theſe ſchemes and hopes my father was ſnatched away by

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an apoplexy; and my mother, who had no pleaſure but in dreſs, equipage, aſſemblies and compliments, finding that ſhe could live no longer in her accuſtomed rank, ſunk into dejection, and in two years wore out her life with envy and diſcontent.

I was ſent with a ſiſter, one year younger than myſelf, to the elder brother of my father. We were not yet capable of obſerving how much fortune influences affection, but flattered ourſelves on the road with the tenderneſs and regard with which we ſhould doubtleſs be treated by our uncle. Our reception was rather frigid than malignant; we were introduced to our young couſins, and for the firſt month more frequently conſoled than upbraided; but in a ſhort time we found our prattle repreſſed, our dreſs neglected, our endearments unregarded, and our requeſts referred to the houſekeeper.

The forms of decency were now violated, and every day produced new inſults. We were ſoon brought to the neceſſity of receding from our imagined equality with our couſins, to whom we ſunk into humble

companions without choice or influence, expected only to echo their opinions, facilitate their deſires, and accompany their rambles. It was unfortunate that our early introduction into polite company and habitual knowledge of the arts of civility, had given us ſuch an appearance of ſuperiority to the aukward baſhfulneſs of our relations, as naturally drew reſpect and preference from every ſtranger who happened on any occaſion to enter the houſe; and my aunt was forced to aſſert the dignity of her own children, while they were ſculking in corners for fear of notice and hanging down their heads in ſilent confuſion, by relating the indiſcretion of our father, diſplaying her own kindneſs, lamenting the miſery of birth without eſtate, and declaring her anxiety for our future proviſion, and the expedients which ſhe had formed to ſecure us from thoſe follies or crimes, to which the conjunction of pride and want often gives occaſion. In a ſhort time care was taken to prevent ſuch vexatious miſtakes; we were told, that fine cloaths would only fill our heads with falſe expectations, and our dreſs was therefore accommodated to our fortune.

CHIL-

CHILDHOOD is not eaſily dejected or mortified. We felt no laſting pain from inſolence or neglect, but finding that we were favoured and commended by all whoſe intereſt did not prompt them to diſcountenance us, preſerved our vivacity and ſpirit to years of greater ſenſibility. It then became irkſome and diſguſting to live without any principle of action but the will of another, and we often met privately in the garden to lament our condition, and to eaſe our hearts with mutual narratives of caprice peeviſhneſs and affront.

THERE are innumerable modes of inſult and tokens of contempt, for which it is not eaſy to find a name, which vaniſh to nothing in an attempt to deſcribe them, and yet may by continual repetition, make day paſs after day in ſorrow and in terror. Phraſes of curſory compliment and eſtabliſhed ſalutation may by a different modulation of the voice or caſt of the countenance convey contrary meanings, and be changed from indications of reſpect to expreſſions of ſcorn. The dependant who cultivates delicacy in himſelf very little conſults his own tranquillity. My unhappy vigilance is every moment diſcovering ſome petulance

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of accent, or arrogance of mien, ſome vehemence of interrogation, or quickneſs of reply that recals my poverty to my mind, and which I feel more acutely as I know not how to reſent it.

You are not however to imagine that I think myſelf diſcharged from the duties of gratitude, only becauſe my relations do not adjuſt their looks or tune their voices to my expectation. The inſolence of benefaction terminates not in negative rudeneſs or obliquities of inſult. I am often told in expreſs terms of the miſeries from which charity has ſnatched me, while multitudes are ſuffered by relations equally near to devolve upon the pariſh; and have more than once heard it numbered among other favours that I am admitted to the ſame table with my couſins.

That I ſit at the firſt table I muſt acknowledge, but I ſit there only that I may feel the ſtings of inferiority. My enquiries are neglected, my opinion is overborn, my aſſertions are controverted; and, as inſolence always propagates itſelf, the ſervants overlook me in imitation of their maſter; if I call modeſtly,

I am not heard, if loudly, my uſurpation of authority is checked by a general frown. I am often obliged to look uninvited upon delicacies, and ſometimes deſired to riſe upon very ſlight pretences.

The incivilities to which I am expoſed would give me leſs pain were they not aggravated by the tears of my ſiſter, whom the young ladies are hourly tormenting with every art of feminine perſecution. As it is ſaid of the ſupreme magiſtrate of *Venice* that he is a prince in one place and a ſlave in another, my ſiſter is a ſervant to her couſins in their apartments, and a companion only at the table. Her wit and beauty draw ſo much regard away from them, that they never ſuffer her to appear with them in any place where they ſolicit notice, or expect admiration, and when they are viſited by neighbouring ladies and paſs their hours in domeſtic amuſements, ſhe is ſometimes called to fill a vacancy, inſulted with contemptuous freedoms, and diſmiſſed to her needle when her place is ſupplied. The heir has of late by the inſtigation of his ſiſters begun to harraſs her with clowniſh jocularity; he ſeems inclined to make his firſt rude eſſays of

of waggery upon her, and by the connivance, if not encouragement of his father, treats her with ſuch licentious brutality, as I cannot bear though I cannot puniſh it.

I BEG to be informed Mr. *Rambler*, how much we can be ſuppoſed to owe to beneficence, exerted on terms like theſe? to beneficence which polutes its gifts with contumely, and may be truly ſaid to pander to pride? I would willingly be told, whether inſolence does not reward its own liberalities, and whether he that exacts ſervility, can with juſtice at the ſame time expect affection?

I am,

Sir, &c.

HYPERDULUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 150. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 24, 1751.

O munera nondum
Intellecta Deûm! LUCAN.

AS daily experience makes it evident that misfortunes are unavoidably incident to human life, that calamity will neither be repelled by fortitude, nor eſcaped by flight, neither awed by greatneſs, nor eluded by obſcurity; philoſophers have endeavoured to reconcile us to that condition which they cannot teach us to mend, by perſuading us that moſt of our evils are made afflictive only by ignorance or perverſeneſs, and that nature has annexed to every viciſſitude of external circumſtances, ſome advantage ſufficient to overbalance all its inconveniencies.

THIS attempt may perhaps be juſtly ſuſpected of reſemblance to the practice of phyſicians, who when they cannot mitigate pain deſtroy ſenſibility, and endeavour to conceal by opiates the inefficacy of their other medicines. The panegyriſts of calamity have more frequently gained applauſe to their wit, than acquieſcence to their arguments; nor has

has it appeared that the moſt muſical oratory or ſubtle ratiocination has been able long to overpower the anguiſh of oppreſſion, the tediouſneſs of languor, or the longings of want.

YET it may be generally remarked that, where much has been attempted, ſomething has been performed; though the diſcoveries or acquiſitions of man are not always adequate to the expectations of his pride, they are at leaſt ſufficient to animate his induſtry. The antidotes with which philoſophy has medicated the cup of life, though they cannot give it ſalubrity and ſweetneſs, have at leaſt allayed its bitterneſs, and contempered its malignity; the balm which ſhe drops upon the wounds of the mind, abates their pain though it cannot heal them.

BY ſuffering willingly what we cannot avoid, we ſecure ourſelves from vain and immoderate diſquiet; we preſerve for better purpoſes that ſtrength which would be unprofitably waſted in wild efforts of deſperation, and maintain that circumſpection which may enable us to ſeize every ſupport, and improve every alleviation. This calmneſs will be

be more easily obtained, as the attention is more powerfully withdrawn from the contemplation of unmingled unabated evil, and diverted to those accidental benefits which prudence may confer on every state.

SENECA has attempted not only to pacify us in misfortune, but almost to allure us to it, by representing it as necessary to the pleasures of the mind. *He that never was acquainted with adversity*, says he, *has seen the world but on one side, and is ignorant of half the scenes of nature.* He invites his pupil to calamity, as the Syrens allured the passenger to their coasts, by promising that he shall return [illegible], with encrease of knowledge, with enlarged views, and multiplied ideas.

CURIOSITY is, in great and generous minds, the first passion and the last; and perhaps always predominates in proportion to the strength of the contemplative faculties. He who easily comprehends all that is before him, and soon exhausts any single subject, is always eager for new enquiries, and in proportion as the intellectual eye takes in a wider prospect, it must be gratified with va-

riety!

riety by more rapid flights, and bolder excurſions; nor perhaps can there be propoſed to thoſe who have been accuſtomed to the pleaſures of thought, a more powerful incitement to any undertaking, than the hope of filling their imagination with new images, of clearing their doubts, and enlightening their reaſon.

When *Jaſon*, in *Valerius Flaccus*, would incline the young prince *Acaſtus* to accompany him in the firſt eſſay of navigation, he diſperſes his apprehenſions of danger by repreſentations of the new tracts of earth and heaven which the expedition would ſpread before their eyes; and tells him with what grief he will hear at their return, of the countries which they ſhall have ſeen, and the toils which they have ſurmounted.

O quantum terræ, quantum cognoſcere cœli
Permiſſum eſt! pelagus quantos aperimus in uſus!
Nunc forſan grave reris opus: ſed læta recurret
Cum ratis, & caram cum jam mihi reddet Jolcon;
Quis pudor heu noſtros tibi tunc audire labores!
Quam referam viſas tua per ſuſpiria gentes!

Acaſtus was ſoon prevailed upon by his curioſity to ſet rocks and hardſhips at defiance, and commit his life to the winds; and the ſame motives have in all ages had the ſame effect upon thoſe whom the deſire of fame or wiſdom has diſtinguiſhed from the lower orders of mankind.

If therefore it can be proved that diſtreſs is neceſſary to the attainment of knowledge, and that a happy ſituation hides from us ſo large a part of the field of meditation, the envy of many who repine at the ſight of affluence and ſplendor will be much diminiſhed; for ſuch is the delight of mental ſuperiority, that none on whom nature or ſtudy have conferred it, would purchaſe the gifts of fortune by its loſs.

It is certain, that however the rhetorick of *Seneca* may have dreſſed adverſity with extrinſick ornaments, he has juſtly repreſented it as affording ſome opportunities of obſervation, which cannot be found in continual ſucceſs; he has truly aſſerted, that to eſcape misfortune is to want inſtruction, and that to live at eaſe is to live in ignorance.

As

As no man can enjoy happineſs without thinking that he enjoys it, the experience of calamity is neceſſary to a juſt ſenſe of better fortune; for the good of our preſent ſtate is merely comparative, and the evil which every man feels will be ſufficient to diſturb and harraſs him if he does not know how much he eſcapes. The luſtre of diamonds is invigorated by the interpoſition of darker bodies; the lights of a picture are heightened by the ſhades. The higheſt pleaſure which nature has indulged to ſenſitive perception, is that of reſt after fatigue; yet that ſtate which labour heightens into delight is without it only eaſe, and is incapable of ſatisfying the mind without the ſuperaddition of diverſified amuſements.

PROSPERITY, as is truly aſſerted by *Seneca*, very much obſtructs the knowledge of ourſelves. No man can form a juſt eſtimate of his own powers by unactive ſpeculation. That fortitude which has encountered no dangers, that prudence which has ſurmounted no difficulties, that integrity which has been attacked by no temptations, can at beſt

be conſidered but as gold not yet brought to the teſt, of which therefore the true value cannot be aſſigned. *He that traverſes the liſts without an adverſary, may receive*, ſays the philoſopher, *the reward of victory, but he has no pretenſions to the honour.* If it be the higheſt happineſs of man to contemplate himſelf with ſatisfaction, and to receive the gratulations of his own conſcience, he whoſe courage has made way amidſt the turbulence of oppoſition, and whoſe vigour has broken through the ſnares of diſtreſs, has many advantages over theſe that have ſlept in the ſhades of indolence, and whoſe retroſpect of time can entertain them with nothing but day riſing upon day, and year gliding after year.

EQUALLY neceſſary is ſome variety of fortune to a nearer inſpection of the manners principles and affections of mankind. Princes, when they would know the opinions or grievances of their ſubjects, find it neceſſary to ſteal away from the grandeur of guards and attendants, and mingle on equal terms among the people. To him who is known to have the power of doing good

or

or harm; nothing is ſhown in its natural form. The behaviour of all that approach him is regulated by his humour, their narratives are adapted to his inclination, and their reaſonings determined by his opinions, whatever can alarm ſuſpicion, or excite reſentment is carefully ſuppreſſed, and nothing appears but uniformity of ſentiments and ardor of affection. It may be obſerved, that the unvaried complaiſance which ladies have the right of exacting, keeps them generally unſkilled in human nature; Proſperity will always enjoy the female prerogatives, and therefore muſt be always in danger of female ignorance. Truth is ſcarcely to be heard but by thoſe from whom it can ſerve no intereſt to conceal it, and the true motives of conduct will be only ſhewn when the mind acts in its natural ſtate, without any impediment from hope or fear.

NUMB. 151. TUESDAY, *August* 27, 1751.

Ἀμφὶ δ' ἀνθρώ-
πων φρεσὶν ἀμπλακίαι
ἀναρίθμητοι κρέμανται.
τοῦτο δ' ἀμήκανον ἰυρεῖν.
Ὅτι νῦν, καὶ ἐν τελευ-
τᾷ φέρτατον ἀνδρὶ τυχεῖν. PIND.

THE writers of medicine and phyſiology have traced with great appearance of accuracy, the effects of time upon the human body, by marking the various periods of the conſtitution, and the ſeveral ſtages by which animal life makes its progreſs from infancy to decrepitude. Though their obſervations have not enabled them to diſcover how manhood may be accelerated, or old age retarded, yet ſurely if they be conſidered only as the amuſements of curioſity, they are of equal importance with conjectures on things more remote, with catalogues of the fixed ſtars, and calculations of the bulk of planets.

IT had been a taſk worthy of the moral philoſophers to have conſidered with equal care

care the climacterick of the mind; to have pointed out the time at which every paſſion begins and ceaſes to predominate, and noted the regular variations of deſire, and the ſucceſſion of one appetite to another.

THE periods of mental change are not to be ſtated with equal certainty: Our bodies grow up under the care of nature, and depend ſo little on our own management, that ſomething more than negligence is neceſſary to diſcompoſe their ſtructure, or impede their vigour. But our minds are committed in a great meaſure firſt to the direction of others and afterwards of ourſelves. It would be difficult to protract the weakneſs of infancy beyond the uſual time, but the mind may be very eaſily hindered from its ſhare of improvement, and the bulk and ſtrength of manhood muſt, without the aſſiſtance of education and inſtruction, be informed only with the underſtanding of a child.

YET amidſt all the diſorder and inequality which variety of diſcipline, example, converſation, and employment produce in the intellectual advances of different men, there is ſtill diſcovered by a vigilant ſpectator ſuch a

general and remote ſimilitude as may be expected in the ſame common nature affected by external circumſtances indefinitely varied. We all enter the world in equal ignorance, gaze round about us on the ſame objects, and have our firſt pains and pleaſures, our firſt hopes and fears, our firſt averſions and deſires from the ſame cauſes; and though as we proceed farther, life opens wider proſpects to our view, and accidental impulſes determine us to different paths, yet as every mind, however vigorous or abſtracted, is neceſſitated in its preſent ſtate of union to receive its informations, and execute its purpoſes by the intervention of the body, the uniformity of our corporeal nature communicates itſelf to our intellectual operations; and thoſe whoſe abilities or knowledge incline them moſt to deviate from the general round of life, are recalled from their excentricity by the laws of their exiſtence.

If we conſider the exerciſes of the mind, it will be found that in each part of life ſome particular faculty is more eminently employed. When the treaſures of knowledge are firſt opened before us, while novelty blooms alike

alike on either hand, and every thing equally unknown and unexamined ſeems of equal value, the power of the ſoul is principally exerted in a vivacious and deſultory curioſity. She applies by turns to every object, enjoys it for a ſhort time, and flies with equal ardor to another. She delights to catch up looſe and unconnected ideas, but ſtarts away from ſyſtems and complications which would obſtruct the rapidity of her tranſitions, and detain her long in the ſame purſuit.

When a number of diſtinct images are collected by theſe erratick and haſty ſurveys, the fancy is buſied in arranging them; and combines them into pleaſing pictures with more reſemblance to the realities of life as experience advances, and new obſervations rectify the former. While the judgment is yet uninformed and unable to compare the draughts of fiction with their originals, we are delighted with improbable adventures, impracticable virtues, and inimitable characters: But in proportion, as we have more opportunities of acquainting ourſelves with living nature, we are ſooner diſguſted with copies in which there appears no reſemblance.

We firſt diſcard abſurdity and impoſſibility, then exact greater and greater degrees of probability, but at laſt become cold and inſenſible to the charms of falſhood, however ſpecious, and from the imitation of truth which are never perfect, transfer our affection to truth itſelf.

Now commences the reign of judgment or reaſon; we begin to find little pleaſure, but in comparing arguments, ſtating propoſitions, diſentangling perplexities, clearing ambiguities, and deducing conſequences. The painted vales of imagination are deſerted, and our intellectual activity is exerciſed in winding through the labyrinths of fallacy, and toiling with firm and cautious ſteps up the narrow tracks of demonſtration. Whatever may lull vigilance, or miſlead attention is contemptuouſly rejected, and every diſguiſe in which error may be concealed, is carefully obſerved, till by degrees a certain number of inconteſtable or unſuſpected propoſitions are eſtabliſhed, and at laſt concatenated into arguments, or compacted into ſyſtems.

At length wearineſs ſucceeds to labour, and the mind lies at eaſe in the contemplation of her own attainments without any deſire of new conqueſts or excurſions. This is the age of recollection and narrative; the opinions are ſettled, and the avenues of apprehenſion ſhut againſt any new intelligence; the days that are to follow muſt paſs in the inculcation of precepts already collected, and aſſertion of tenets already received; nothing is henceforward ſo odious as oppoſition, ſo inſolent as doubt, or ſo dangerous as novelty.

In like manner the paſſions uſurp the ſeparate command of the ſucceſſive periods of life. To the happineſs of our firſt years nothing more ſeems neceſſary than freedom from reſtraint: Every man may remember that if he was left to himſelf, and indulged in the diſpoſal of his own time, he was once content without the ſuperaddition of any actual pleaſure. The new world is itſelf a banquet, and till we have exhauſted the freſhneſs of life, we have always about us ſufficient gratifications: The ſunſhine quickens us to play, and the ſhade invites us to ſleep.

But

But we ſoon become unſatisfied with negative felicity, and are ſolicited by our ſenſes and appetites to more powerful delights, as the taſte of him who has ſatisfied his hunger muſt be excited by artificial ſtimulations. The ſimplicity of natural amuſement is now paſt, and art and contrivance muſt improve our pleaſures; but in time art like nature is exhauſted, and the ſenſes can no longer ſupply the cravings of the intellect.

The attention is then transferred from pleaſure to intereſt, in which pleaſure is perhaps included, though diffuſed to a wider extent, and protracted through new gradations. Nothing now dances before the eyes but wealth and power, nor rings in the ear but the voice of fame; wealth, to which, however variouſly denominated, every man at ſome time or other aſpires, power, which all wiſh to obtain within their circle of action, and fame, which no man, however high or mean, however wiſe or ignorant, was yet able to deſpiſe. Now prudence and foreſight exert their influence: No hour is devoted wholly to any preſent enjoyment, no act or purpoſe

purpoſe terminates in itſelf, but every motion is referred to ſome diſtant end; the accompliſhment of one deſign begins another, and the ultimate wiſh is always puſhed off to its former diſtance.

At length fame is obſerved to be uncertain, and power to be dangerous; the man whoſe vigour and alacrity begin to forſake him, by degrees contracts his deſigns, remits his former multiplicity of perſuits, and extends no longer his regard to any other honour than the reputation of wealth, or any other influence than its power. Avarice is generally the laſt paſſion of thoſe lives of which the firſt part has been ſquandered in pleaſure, and the ſecond devoted to ambition. He that ſinks under the fatigue of getting wealth, lulls his age with the milder buſineſs of ſaving it.

I have in this view of life conſidered men as actuated only by natural deſires, and yielding to their own inclinations without regard to ſuperior principles by which the force of external agents may be counteracted, and the temporary prevalence of paſſions reſtrained. Nature will indeed always operate, human deſires

deſires will be always ranging from one object to another; but theſe motions though very powerful are not reſiſtleſs; nature may be regulated, and deſires governed; and to contend with the predominance of ſucceſſive paſſions, to be endangered firſt by one affection, and then by another, is the condition upon which we are to paſs our time, the time of our preparation for that ſtate which ſhall put an end to experiment, to diſappointment, and to change.

NUMB. 152. SATURDAY, *Auguſt* 31, 1751.

Triſtia mæſtum
Vultum verba decent, iratum plena minarum.
HOR.

"IT was the wiſdom, ſays *Seneca*, of "antient times, to conſider what is moſt "uſeful as moſt illuſtrious." If this rule be obſerved with regard to works of genius, ſcarcely any ſpecies of compoſition deſerves more to be cultivated than the epiſtolary ſtile, ſince none is of more various or frequent uſe, through the whole ſubordination of human life.

IT has yet happened that among the numerous Writers which our nation has produced, equal

equal perhaps always in force and genius, and of late in elegance and accuracy to thoſe of any other country, very few have endeavoured to diſtinguiſh themſelves by the publication of letters, except ſuch as were written in the diſcharge of publick truſts, and during the tranſaction of great affairs, which though they afford precedents to the miniſter, and memorials to the hiſtorian, are of no uſe as examples of the familiar ſtile, or models of private correſpondence.

If it be enquired by foreigners how this deficiency has happened in the literature of a country, where all indulge themſelves with ſo little danger in ſpeaking and writing, may we not without either bigotry or arrogance inform them, that it muſt be imputed to our contempt of trifles, and our due ſenſe of the dignity of the publick? We do not think it reaſonable to fill the world with volumes from which nothing can be learned, nor expect that the employments of the buſy, or the amuſements of the gay, ſhould give way to narratives of our private affairs, complaints of abſence, expreſſions of fondneſs, or declarations of fidelity.

A SLIGHT peruſal of the innumerable letters by which the wits of *France* have ſignalized their names, will prove that other nations need not be diſcouraged from the like attempts by the conciouſneſs of inability; for ſurely it is not very difficult to aggravate trifling misfortunes, to magnify familiar incidents, repeat adulatory profeſſions, accumulate ſervile hyperboles, and produce all that can be found in the deſpicable remains of *Voiture* and *Scarron*.

YET as much of life muſt be paſſed in affairs conſiderable only by their frequent occurrence, and much of the pleaſure which our condition allows muſt be produced by giving elegance to trifles, it is neceſſary to learn how to become little without becoming mean, to maintain the neceſſary intercourſe of civility, and fill up the vacuities of action by agreeable appearances. It had therefore been of advantage if ſuch of our writers as have excelled in the art of decorating inſignificance, had ſupplied us with a few ſallies of innocent gaiety, effuſions of honeſt tenderneſs, or exclamations of unimportant hurry.

PRECEPT has generally been poſterior to performance. The art of compoſing works of genius has never been taught but by the example of thoſe who performed it by natural vigour of imagination, and rectitude of judgment. As we have few letters, we have likewiſe few criticiſms upon the epiſtolary ſtile. The obſervations with which *Walſh* has introduced his pages of inanity are ſuch as give him little claim to the rank aſſigned him by *Dryden* among the criticks. *Letters*, ſays he, *are intended as reſemblances of converſation, and the chief excellencies of converſation are good humour and good breeding*. This remark, equally valuable for its novelty and propriety, he dilates and enforces with an appearance of compleat acquieſcence in his own diſcovery.

No Man was ever in doubt about the moral qualities of a letter. It has been always known that he who endeavours to pleaſe muſt appear pleaſed, and he who would not provoke rudeneſs muſt not practiſe it. But the queſtion among thoſe who eſtabliſh rules for an epiſtolary performance is how gaiety or civility may be properly expreſſed, as among the criticks

in

in hiſtory it is not conteſted whether truth ought to be preſerved, but by what mode of diction it is beſt adorned.

As letters are written on all ſubjects, in all ſtates of mind, they cannot be properly reduced to ſettled rules, or deſcribed by any ſingle characteriſtic; and we may ſafely diſentangle our minds from critical embarraſſments, by determining that a letter has no peculiarity but its form, and that nothing is to be refuſed admiſſion which would be proper in any other method of treating the ſame ſubject. The qualities of the epiſtolary ſtile moſt frequently required are eaſe and ſimplicity, an even flow of unlaboured diction, and an artleſs arrangement of obvious ſentiments. But theſe directions are no ſooner applied to uſe, than their ſcantineſs and imperfection became evident. Letters are written to the great and to the mean, to the learned and the ignorant, at reſt and in diſtreſs, in ſport and in paſſion. Nothing can be more improper than eaſe and laxity of expreſſion, when the importance of the ſubject impreſſes ſolicitude, or the dignity of the perſon exacts reverence.

THAT letters ſhould be written with ſtrict conformity to nature is true, becauſe nothing but conformity to nature can make any compoſition beautiful or juſt. But it is natural to depart from familiarity of language upon occaſions not familiar: Whatever elevates the ſentiments will conſequently raiſe the expreſſion; whatever fills us with hope or terror will produce ſome perturbation of images, and ſome figurative diſtortions of phraſe. Wherever we are ſtudious to pleaſe we are afraid of truſting our firſt thoughts, and endeavour to recommend our opinion by ſtudied ornaments, accuracy of method, and elegance of ſtile.

IF the perſonages of the comick ſcene, be allowed by *Horace* to raiſe their language in the tranſports of anger to the turgid vehemence of tragedy, the epiſtolary writer may likewiſe without cenſure comply with the varieties of his matter. If great events are to be related, he may with all the ſolemnity of an hiſtorian, deduce them from their cauſes, connect them with their concomitants, and trace them to their conſequences. If a diſputed poſition is to be eſtabliſhed, or a remote prin-

principle to be inveſtigated, he may detail his reaſonings with all the nicety of ſyllogiſtick method. If a menace is to be averted, or a benefit implored, he may without any violation of the edicts of criticiſm call every power of rhetorick to his aſſiſtance, and try every inlet at which love or pity enters the heart.

LETTERS that have no other end than the entertainment of the correſpondent are more properly regulated by critical precepts, becauſe the matter and ſtile are equally arbitrary, and rules are more neceſſary, as there is larger power of choice. In letters of this kind, ſome conceive art graceful, and others think negligence amiable; ſome model them by the ſonnet, and will allow them no means of delighting but the ſoft lapſe of calm melliſluence; others adjuſt them by the epigram, and expect pointed ſentences and forcible periods. The one party conſiders exemption from faults as the height of excellence, the other looks upon neglect of excellence as the moſt diſguſting fault; one avoids cenſure, the other aſpires to praiſe; one is always in danger of inſipidity, the other continually on the brink of affectation.

WHEN

When the ſubject has no intrinſick dignity it muſt neceſſarily owe its attractions to artificial embelliſhments, and may catch at all advantages which the art of writing can ſupply. He that, like *Pliny*, ſends his friend a portion for his daughter, will without *Pliny*'s eloquence or addreſs, find means of exciting gratitude, and ſecuring acceptance; but he that has no preſent to make but a garland, a ribbon, or ſome petty curioſity, muſt endeavour to recommend it by his manner of giving it.

The purpoſe for which letters are written when no intelligence is communicated, or buſineſs tranſacted, is to preſerve in the minds of the abſent either love or eſteem; to excite love we muſt impart pleaſure, and to raiſe eſteem we muſt diſcover abilities. Pleaſure will generally be given, as abilities are diſplayed by ſcenes of imagery, points of conceit, unexpected ſallies and artful compliments. Trifles always require exuberance of ornament; the building which has no ſtrength can be valued only for the grace of its decorations. The pebble muſt be poliſhed with care, which hopes to be valued as a diamond; and words ought ſurely to be laboured when they are intended to ſtand for things.

NUMB. 153, TUESDAY, *September* 3, 1751.

Turba Remi sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit Damnatos. JUV.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THERE are certain occasions on which all apology is rudeness. He that has an unwelcome message to deliver, or unhappy incident to relate, may perhaps give some proof of tenderness and delicacy, by a ceremonial introduction and gradual discovery, because the mind, upon which the weight of sorrow is to fall, gains time for the collection of its powers; but nothing is more absurd than to delay the communication of Pleasure, to torment curiosity by impatience, and to delude hope by anticipation.

I SHALL forbear the arts by which correspondents are generally careful to secure admission, for I have had too many opportunities of remarking the power of vanity and interest, to doubt that I shall be read by

by you with a diſpoſition to approve, when I declare that my narrative has no other tendency than to illuſtrate and corroborate your own obſervations.

I WAS the ſecond ſon of a gentleman, whoſe patrimony had been waſted by a long ſucceſſion of ſquanderers till he was unable to ſupport any of his children except his heir in the hereditary dignity of idleneſs. Being therefore ſent to ſchool, and obliged to employ that part of life in ſtudy which my progenitors had devoted to the hawk and hound, I was in my eighteenth year diſpatched with loud praiſes from my maſter to the univerſity, without any rural honours or accompliſhments. I had never killed a ſingle woodcock, nor partaken one triumph over a conquered fox.

AT the univerſity I continued to enlarge my acquiſitions with very little envy of the noiſy happineſs which my elder brother had the fortune to enjoy, and having obtained my degree at the uſual time, retired into the country to conſider at leiſure to what profeſſion I ſhould confine that application, which

which had hitherto been diſſipated in general knowledge. To deliberate upon a choice which cuſtom and honour forbid to be retracted, is certainly reaſonable, yet to let looſe the attention equally to the advantages and inconveniencies of every employment is not without danger; new motives are every moment operating on every ſide; and mechanicks have long ago diſcovered, that contrariety of equal attractions is equivalent to reſt.

While I was thus trifling in uncertainty, an old adventurer who had been once the intimate friend of my father arrived from the *Indies* with a large fortune, which he had ſo much harraſſed himſelf in obtaining, that ſickneſs and infirmity left him no other deſire than to die in his native country. His wealth eaſily procured him an invitation to paſs his life with us, and being incapable of any amuſement but converſation, he neceſſarily became familiariſed to me, whom he found ſtudious and domeſtick. Pleaſed with an opportunity of imparting my knowledge, and eager of any intelligence that might encreaſe it, I delighted his curioſity with hiſtorical narratives, ſyſtems of policy, and explica-

plications of nature, and gratified his vanity by frequent enquiries after the products of distant countries, and the customs of their inhabitants.

My Brother saw how much I advanced in favour of our guest, who being without heirs was naturally expected to enrich the family of his friend, but neither attempted to alienate me, nor to ingratiate himself. He was indeed little qualified to solicit the affection of an old traveller, for the remissness of his education had left him without any rule of action, but his present humour. He often forsook the old gentleman in the midst of an adventure, because the horn sounded in the court-yard, and would have lost an opportunity, not only of knowing the history, but sharing the wealth of the Mogul, for the trial of a new pointer, or the sight of a horse-race.

It was therefore not long before our new friend declared his intention of bequeathing to me the profits of his commerce, as the only man in the family by whom he could

expect them to be rationally enjoyed. This diſtinction drew upon me the envy not only of my brother but my father. As no man is willing to believe that he ſuffers by his own fault, they imputed the preference which I had obtained to artifice and fraud, adulatory compliances or malignant calumnies. To no purpoſe did I call upon my patron to atteſt my innocence, for who will believe what he wiſhes to be falſe? The ſame heat and ignorance which gave me the firſt advantage confirmed my ſuperiority, they forced their inmate by repeated inſults to depart from the houſe, and I was ſoon by the ſame treatment obliged to follow him.

He choſe his reſidence in the confines of *London*, where reſt tranquility and medicine reſtored him to part of the health which he had loſt. I pleaſed myſelf with perceiving that I was not likely to obtain an immediate poſſeſſion of wealth, which no labour of mine had contributed to acquire; and that he who had thus diſtinguiſhed me, might hope to obtain a few years of chearfulneſs and plenty, and end his life without a total fruſtration of thoſe bleſſings, which, whatever be their real value,

value, he had ſought with ſo much diligence, and purchaſed with ſo many viciſſitudes of danger and fatigue.

He indeed left me no reaſon to repine at his recovery, for he was willing to accuſtom me early to the uſe of money, and ſet apart for my annual expences ſuch a revenue as I had ſcarcely dared to image to myſelf in the warmeſt moments of hope and ambition. I can yet congratulate myſelf that fortune has ſeen her golden cup once taſted without inebriation. Neither my modeſty nor prodence were overwhelmed by affluence; my elevation was without inſolence, and my expence without profuſion. Employing the influence which money always confers, to the enlargement of my views and improvement of my underſtanding, I mingled ſometimes in parties of gaiety, and ſometimes in conferences of learning, appeared in every place where inſtruction was to be found, and imagined that by ranging through all the diverſities of life I had acquainted myſelf fully with human nature, and learned all that was to be known of the ways of men.

It happened, however, that I ſoon diſcovered how much was wanting to the completion of my knowledge, and found that, according to *Seneca*'s remark, I had hitherto ſeen the world but on one ſide. My patron's confidence in his encreaſe of ſtrength tempted him to careleſſneſs and irregularity; he caught a fever by riding in the rain, of which he died delirious on the third day. I buried him without any of the heir's affected grief or ſecret exultation; then prepaparing to take a legal poſſeſſion of his fortune, opened his cloſet, where I found a will, made at his firſt arrival, by which my father was appointed the chief inheritor of his riches, and nothing was left me but a legacy ſufficient to ſupport me in the proſecution of my ſtudies.

I had not yet found ſuch charms in proſperity as to continue it by any acts of forgery or injuſtice, and made haſte to inform my father of the riches which had been given him, not by ſettled kindneſs, but by the delays of indolence, and the cowardice of age. The hungry family flew like vulturs on their

prey,

prey, and ſoon made my diſappointment publick by the tumult of their claims, and the ſplendour of their ſorrow.

It was now my part to conſider how I ſhould repair the diſappointment which I had ſuffered. I could not but triumph in my long liſt of friends which compriſed almoſt every name that power or knowledge entitled to eminence, and in the proſpect of the innumerable roads to honour and preferment which I had laid open to myſelf by the wiſe uſe of temporary riches. I believed nothing neceſſary but that I ſhould continue that acquaintance to which I had been ſo readily admitted, and which had hitherto been cultivated on both ſides with equal ardour.

Full of theſe expectations, I one morning ordered a chair, with an intention to make my uſual circle of morning viſits. Where I firſt ſtopped I ſaw two footmen lolling at the door, who told me, without any change of poſture or collection of countenance, that their maſter was at home, and ſuffered me to open the inner door without aſſiſtance. I found my friend ſtanding, and

as I was tattling with my former freedom, was formally entreated to ſit down, but did not ſtay to be favoured with any farther condeſcenſions.

My next experiment was made at the levee of a ſtateſman, who received me with an embrace of tenderneſs, that he might with more decency publiſh my change of fortune to the ſycophants about him. After he had enjoyed the triumph of condolence, he turned to a wealthy ſtockjobber, and left me expoſed to the ſcorn of thoſe who had lately courted my notice and ſolicited my intereſt.

I was then ſet down at the door of another, who upon my entrance adviſed me with great ſolemnity to think of ſome ſettled proviſion for life. I left him and hurried away to an old friend, who profeſſed himſelf unſuſceptible of any impreſſions from proſperity or misfortune, and begged that he might ſee me when he was more at leiſure.

Of ſixty-ſeven doors at which I knocked in the firſt week after my appearance in a mour-

mourning dreſs, I was denied admiſſion at forty ſeven; was ſuffered at thirteen to wait in the outer room till buſineſs was diſpatched; at four was entertained with a few queſtions about the weather; at one heard the footmen rated for bringing my name; and at two was informed in the flow of caſual converſation how much a man of rank degrades himſelf by mean company.

My curioſity now led me to try what reception I ſhould find among the ladies, but I found that my patron had carried all my powers of pleaſing to the grave. I had formerly been celebrated as a wit, and not perceiving any langour in my imagination, I eſſayed to revive that gaiety which had hitherto broken out involuntarily before my ſentences were finiſhed. My remarks were now heard with a ſteady countenance, and if a girl happened to give way to habitual merriment, her forwardneſs was repreſſed with a frown by her mother or her aunt.

Wherever I come I ſcatter infirmity and diſeaſe; every lady whom I meet in the Mall is too weary to walk; all whom I en-

treat to ſing are troubled with colds; if I propoſe cards they are afflicted with the headach; if I invite them to the gardens they cannot bear a crowd.

ALL this might be endured; but there is a claſs of mortals who think my underſtanding impaired with with my fortune; exalt themſelves to the dignity of advice, and whenever we happen to meet, preſume to preſcribe my conduct, regulate my œconomy, and direct my purſuits. Another race equally impertinent and equally deſpicable, are every moment recommending to me an attention to my intereſt, and think themſelves entitled by their ſuperior prudence to reproach me if I ſpeak or move without regard to profit.

SUCH, Mr. *Rambler*, is the power of wealth, that it commands the ear of greatneſs and the eye of beauty, gives ſpirit to the dull, and authority to the timorous, and leaves him from whom it departs, without virtue and without underſtanding, the ſport of caprice, the ſcoff of inſolence, the ſlave of meanneſs, and the pupil of ignorance.

I am, &c.

NUMB.

NUMB. 154. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 7, 1751.

—Tibi res antiquæ laudis & artis
Aggredior, ſanctos auſus recludere fontes.

VIRG.

THE direction of *Ariſtotle* to thoſe that ſtudy politicks, is, firſt to examine and underſtand what has been written by the antients upon government; then to caſt their eyes round upon the world, and conſider by what cauſes the proſperity of communities is viſibly influenced, and why ſome are worſe and others better adminiſtered.

THE ſame method muſt be purſued by him who hopes to become eminent in any other part of knowledge. The firſt taſk is to ſearch books, the next to contemplate nature. He muſt firſt poſſeſs himſelf of the intellectual treaſures which the diligence of former ages has accumulated, and then endeavour to encreaſe them by his own collections.

THE mental diſeaſe of the preſent generation, is impatience of ſtudy, contempt of the great maſters of antient wiſdom, and a diſpoſition to rely wholly upon unaſſiſted genius and natural ſagacity. The wits of theſe happy days have diſcovered a way to fame, which the dull caution of our laborious anceſtors durſt never attempt; they cut the knots of ſophiſtry which it was formerly the buſineſs of years to untie; find themſelves enabled to ſolve all difficulties by ſudden irradiations of intelligence, and comprehend long proceſſes of argument by immediate intuition.

MEN who have flattered themſelves into this opinion of their own abilities, look down on all who waſte their lives over books, as a race of inferior beings condemned by nature to perpetual pupillage, qualified for no higher employment than that of propagating opinions implicitly received, and fruitleſly endeavouring to remedy their barrenneſs by inceſſant cultivation, or ſuccour their feebleneſs by ſubſidiary ſtrength. They preſume that none would be more induſtrious

duſtrious than they if they were not more ſenſible of deficiencies, and readily conclude, that he who places no confidence in his own powers, owes his modeſty only to his weakneſs.

It is however certain that no eſtimate is more in danger of erroneous calculations than thoſe by which a man computes the force of his own genius. It generally happens at our entrance into the world, that by the natural attraction of ſimilitude, we aſſociate with men like ourſelves young, ſprightly, and ignorant, and rate our accompliſhments by compariſon with theirs; when we have once obtained an acknowledged ſuperiority over our acquaintances, a warm imagination and ſtrong deſire eaſily extend it over the reſt of mankind, and if no accident forces us into new emulations, we grow old and die in admiration of ourſelves.

Vanity, thus confirmed in her dominion, readily liſtens to the voice of idleneſs, and ſooths the ſlumber of life with continual dreams of excellence and greatneſs. A man elated by confidence in his natural vigour of

of fancy and ſagacity of conjecture, ſoon concludes that he already poſſeſſes whatever toil and enquiry can confer. He then liſtens with eagerneſs to the wild objections which folly has raiſed againſt the common means of improvement; talks of the dark chaos of indigeſted knowledge; deſcribes the miſchievous effects of heterogenous ſciences fermenting in the mind; relates the blunders of lettered ignorance; expatiates on the heroick merit of thoſe who deviate from the tracks of preſcription, or ſhake off the ſhackles of authority; and gives vent to the inflations of his heart by declaring that he owes nothing to pedants and univerſities.

All theſe pretenſions, however confident, are very often vain. The laurels which ſuperficial acuteneſs gains from triumphs over ignorance unſupported by vivacity, are obſerved by *Locke* to be loſt whenever real learning and rational diligence appear againſt her; the ſallies of gaiety are ſoon repreſſed by calm confidence, and the artifices of ſubtilty are readily detected by thoſe who having carefully ſtudied the queſtion, are not eaſily confounded or ſurpriſed.

But

But though the contemner of books, had neither been deceived by others nor himſelf, and was really born with a genius ſurpaſſing the ordinary abilities of mankind; yet ſurely ſuch gifts of providence may be more properly urged as incitements to labour, than encouragements to negligence. He that neglects the culture of ground, naturally fertile, is more ſhamefully culpable than he whoſe field would ſcarcely recompence his huſbandry.

CICERO remarks, that not to know what has been tranſacted in former times is to continue always a child. If we make no uſe of the labours of our anceſtors the world muſt remain always in the infancy of knowledge. The diſcoveries of every man muſt terminate in his own advantage, and the ſtudies of every age be employed on queſtions which the paſt generation had diſcuſſed and determined. We may with as little reproach make uſe of the ſciences as the manufactures of our anceſtors; and it is as rational to live in caves till our own hands have erected a palace, as to reject all knowledge of architecture, which our underſtandings will not ſupply.

To

To the ſtrongeſt and quickeſt mind it is far eaſier to learn than to invent. The principles of arithmetick and geometry may be comprehended by a cloſe attention in a few days; yet who can flatter himſelf that the ſtudy of a long life would have enabled him to diſcover them, when he ſees them yet unknown to ſo many nations, whom he cannot ſuppoſe leſs liberally endowed with natural reaſon, than the *Grecians* or *Egyptians?*

EVERY ſcience was thus far advanced towards perfection, by the emulous diligence of contemporary ſtudents, and the gradual diſcoveries of one age improving on another. Sometimes unexpected flaſhes of inſtruction were ſtruck out by the fortuitous colliſion of happy incidents, or an involuntary concurrence of ideas, in which the philoſopher to whom they happened had no other merit than that of knowing their value, and tranſmitting unclouded to poſterity that light which had been kindled by cauſes out of his power. The happineſs of theſe caſual illuminations no man can promiſe to himſelf, becauſe no endeavours can procure them;

and

and therefore, whatever be our abilities or application, we muſt ſubmit to learn from others what perhaps would have lain hid for ever from human penetration, had not ſome remote enquiry brought it to view; as treaſures are thrown up by the ploughman and the digger in the rude exerciſe of their common occupations.

The man whoſe genius qualifies him for great undertakings, muſt at leaſt be content to learn from books the preſent ſtate of human knowledge; that he may not aſcribe to himſelf the invention of arts generally known; weary his attention with experiments of which the event has been long regiſtered; and waſte, in attempts which have already ſucceeded or miſcarried, that time which might have been ſpent with uſefulneſs and honour upon new undertakings.

But though the ſtudy of books is neceſſary, it is not ſufficient to conſtitute literary eminence. He that wiſhes to be counted among the benefactors of poſterity, muſt add by his own toil to the acquiſitions of his anceſtors, and ſecure his memory from neglect

by

by ſome valuable improvement. This can only be effected by looking out upon the waſtes of the intellectual world, and extending the power of learning over regions yet undiſciplined and barbarous; or by ſurveying more exactly her antient dominions, and driving ignorance from the fortreſſes and retreats where ſhe ſkulks undetected and undiſturbed. Every ſcience has its difficulties which yet call for ſolution before we attempt new ſyſtems of knowledge; as every country has its foreſts and marſhes, which it would be wiſe to cultivate and drain, before diſtant colonies are projected as a neceſſary diſcharge of the exuberance of inhabitants.

No man ever yet became great by imitation. Whatever hopes for the veneration of mankind muſt have invention in the deſign or the execution; either the effect muſt itſelf be new, or the means by which it is produced. Either truths hitherto unknown muſt be diſcovered, or thoſe which are already known enforced by ſtronger evidence, facilitated by clearer method, or elucidated by brighter illuſtrations.

Fame

Fame cannot ſpread wide or endure long that is not rooted in nature, and manured by art. That which hopes to reſiſt the blaſt of malignity, and ſtand firm againſt the attacks of time, muſt contain in itſelf ſome original principle of growth. The reputation which ariſes from the detail or tranſpoſition of borrowed ſentiments may ſpread for a while, like ivy on the rind of antiquity, but will be torn away by accident or contempt, and ſuffered to rot unheeded on the ground.

NUMB. 155. TUESDAY, *September*, 10, 1751.

——— *Steriles tranſmiſimus annos,*
Hæc ævi mihi prima dies, hæc limina vitæ.

STATIUS.

NO weakneſs of the human mind has more frequently incurred animadverſion, than the negligence with which men overlook their own faults, however flagrant, and the eaſineſs with which they pardon them, however frequently repeated.

IT ſeems generally believed, that, as the eye cannot ſee itſelf, the mind has no faculties

ties by which it can contemplate its own ſtate, and that therefore we have not means of becoming acquainted with our real characters; an opinion, which, like innumerable other poſtulates, an enquirer finds himſelf inclined to admit upon very little evidence, becauſe it affords a ready ſolution of many difficulties. It will explain why the greateſt abilities frequently fail to promote the happineſs of thoſe who poſſeſs them; why thoſe who can diſtinguiſh with the utmoſt nicety the boundaries of vice and virtue, ſuffer them to be confounded in their own conduct; why the active and vigilant reſign their affairs implicitly to the management of others; and why the cautious and fearful make hourly approaches towards ruin without one ſigh of ſolicitude or ſtruggle for eſcape.

When a poſition teems thus with commodious conſequences, who can without regret confeſs it to be falſe? Yet it is certain that the pleaſure of wantoning in flowery periods, and the pride of ſwelling with airy declamation has produced a diſpoſition to deſcribe the dominion of the paſſions as extended beyond the limits that nature has aſſigned.

Self-love

Self-love is often rather arrogant than blind; it does not hide our faults from ourſelves, but perſuades us, that they eſcape the notice of others, and diſpoſes us to reſent cenſures leſt we ſhould confeſs them to be juſt, and to claim honours that in our opinion we do not merit. We are ſecretly conſcious of defects and vices which we hope to conceal from the publick eye, and pleaſe ourſelves with the ſucceſs of innumerable impoſtures, by which, in reality, no body is deceived.

In proof of the dimneſs of our internal ſight, or the general inability of man to determine rightly concerning his own character, it is common to urge the ſucceſs of the moſt abſurd and incredible flattery, and the reſentment which is always raiſed by advice, however ſoft, benevolent, and reaſonable. But flattery, if its operation be nearly examined, will be found to owe its acceptance not to our ignorance but knowledge of our failures, and to delight us rather as it conſoles our wants than diſplays our poſſeſſions. He that ſhall ſolicit the favour of his patron by praiſing him for qualities which he can find

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in himſelf, will always be defeated by the more daring panegyriſt who enriches him with adſcititious excellence, and plunders antiquity, for the decoration of his name. Juſt praiſe is only a debt, but flattery is a preſent. The acknowledgement of thoſe virtues on which conſcience congratulates us, is a tribute that we can at any time exact with confidence, but the celebration of thoſe which we only feign, or deſire without any vigorous endeavours to attain them, is received as a confeſſion of ſovereignty over regions that we never conquered, as a favourable deciſion of diſputable claims, and is more welcome as it is more gratuitous.

ADVICE is generally offenſive, not becauſe it lays us open to unexpected regret, or convicts us of any fault which had eſcaped our notice, but becauſe it ſhows us that we are known to others as well as to ourſelves, that our artifices of hypocriſy have been detected, or that the fear of our reſentment has loſt its influence; and the officious monitor is perſecuted with hatred, not becauſe his accuſation is conſidered as falſe, but becauſe he aſſumes that ſuperiority which we are not willing to grant

grant him, and has dared to detect what we desired to conceal.

For this reason advice is commonly ineffectual. If those who follow the call of their desires, without enquiry whither they are going, had deviated ignorantly from the paths of wisdom, and were rushing upon dangers unforeseen, they would readily listen to information that recals them from their errors, and catch the first alarm by which destruction or infamy is denounced. Few that wander in the wrong way mistake it for the right; they only find it more smooth and flowery, and indulge their own choice rather than approve it, therefore few are persuaded to quit it by admonition or reproof, since it impresses no new conviction nor confers any powers of action or resistance. He that is gravely informed how soon profusion will annihilate his fortune, hears with little advantage what he knew before, and catches at the next occasion of expence, because advice has no force to suppress his vanity. He that is told how certainly intemperance will hurry him to the grave, runs with his usual speed to a new course of luxury, because his reason

reaſon is not invigorated, nor his appetite weakened.

THE miſchief of flattery is that of ſuppreſſing the influence of honeſt ambition, by an opinion that honour may be gained without the toil of merit; and the benefit of advice ariſes commonly from the diſcovery which it affords of the publick ſuffrages. He that could withſtand conſcience, is frighted at infamy, and ſhame prevails when reaſon was defeated.

As we all know our own faults, and know them generally with many aggravations which human perſpicacity cannot diſcover, there is, perhaps, no man, however hardened by impudence or diſſipated by levity, ſheltered by hypocriſy, or blaſted by diſgrace, who does not intend ſome time to review his conduct, and to regulate the remainder of his life by the laws of virtue. New temptations indeed attack him, new invitations are offered by pleaſure and intereſt, and the hour of reformation is always delayed; every delay gives vice another opportunity of fortifying itſelf by habit; and the change of

manners, though ſincerely intended and rationally planned, is referred to the time when ſome craving paſſion ſhall be fully gratified, or ſome powerful allurement ceaſe its importunity.

THUS procraſtination is accumulated on procraſtination, and one impediment ſucceeds another, till age ſhatters our reſolution, or death intercepts the project of amendment. Such is often the end of ſalutary purpoſes, after they have long delighted the imagination, and appeaſed that diſquiet which every mind feels from known miſconduct, when the attention is not diverted by buſineſs or by pleaſure.

NOTHING ſurely can be more unworthy of a reaſonable nature, than to continue in a ſtate ſo oppoſite to real happineſs, as that all the peace of ſolitude, and felicity of meditation, muſt ariſe from reſolutions of forſaking it. Yet the world will often afford opportunities of obſerving men, who paſs months and years in a continual war with their own convictions, and are daily dragged by habit or betrayed by paſſion into practices,

practices, which they cloſed and opened their eyes with purpoſes to avoid; purpoſes which though ſettled on conviction, the firſt impulſe of momentary deſire totally overthrows.

The influence of cuſtom is indeed ſuch that to conquer it will require the utmoſt efforts of fortitude and virtue, nor can I think any man more worthy of veneration and renown, than thoſe who have burſt the ſhackles of habitual vice. This victory is more heroick as the objects of guilty gratification are more familiar, and the recurrence of ſolicitation more frequent. He that from experience of the folly of ambition reſigns his offices of power, ſets himſelf free at once from temptation to ſquander his life in courts, becauſe he cannot regain his former ſtation. He who is enſlaved by an amorous paſſion, may quit his tyrant in diſguſt, and abſence will without the help of reaſon overcome by degrees the deſire of returning. But thoſe appetites to which every place affords their proper object, and which require no preparatory meaſures or gradual advances, are more tenaciouſly adheſive; the wiſh is ſo near the enjoyment, that compliance often

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precedes conſideration, and before the powers of reaſon can be ſummoned the time for employing them is paſt.

INDOLENCE is therefore one of the vices from which thoſe whom it once infects are ſeldom reformed. Every other ſpecies of luxury operates upon ſome appetite that is quickly ſatiated, and requires ſome concurrence of art or accident which every place will not ſupply; but the deſire of eaſe acts equally at all hours, and the longer it is indulged is the more encreaſed. To do nothing is in every man's power; we can never want an opportunity of omitting duties. The lapſe to indolence is ſoft and imperceptible, becauſe it is only a mere ceſſation of activity, but the return to diligence is difficult, becauſe it implies a change from reſt to motion, from privation to reality.

Facilis deſcenſus Averni:
Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis:
Sed revocare gradum, ſuperaſque evadere ad auras,
Hoc opus, hic labor eſt.

IT might perhaps be uſeful to the conqueſt of all theſe enſnarers of the mind if at cer-

tain ſtated days life was reviewed. Many things neceſſary are omitted, becauſe we vainly imagine that they may be always performed, and what cannot be done without pain will for ever be delayed if the time of doing it be left unſettled. No corruption is great but by long negligence, which can ſcarcely prevail in a mind regularly and frequently awakened by periodical remorſe. He that thus breaks his life into parts, will find in himſelf a deſire to diſtinguiſh every ſtage of his exiſtence by ſome improvement, and delight himſelf with the approach of the day of recollection, as of the time which is to begin a new ſeries of virtue and felicity.

NUMB. 156. SATURDAY, *September* 14, 1751.

Nunquam aliud natura, aliud ſapientia dicit.
JUV.

EVERY government, ſay the politicians, is perpetually degenerating towards corruption, from which it muſt be reſcued at certain periods by the reſuſcitation of its firſt principles, and the re-eſtabliſhment of its original conſtitution. Every animal body, according

cording to the methodick phyſicians, is by the predominance of ſome exuberant quality continually declining towards diſeaſe and death, which muſt be obviated by a ſeaſonable reduction of the peccant humour to the juſt equipoiſe which health requires.

In the ſame manner the ſtudies of mankind, all at leaſt which not being ſubject to rigorous demonſtration admit the influence of fancy and caprice, are perpetually tending to error and confuſion. Of the great principles of truth which the firſt ſpeculatiſts diſcovered, the ſimplicity is embarraſſed by ambitious additions, or the evidence obſcured by inaccurate argumentation; and as they deſcend from one ſucceſſion of writers to another, like light tranſmitted from room to room, they loſe their ſtrength and ſplendor, and fade at laſt in total evaneſcence.

The ſyſtems of learning therefore muſt be ſometimes reviewed, complications analiſed into principles, and knowledge diſentangled from opinion. It is not always poſſible, without a cloſe inſpection, to ſeparate the genuine ſhoots of conſequential reaſoning, which

grow out of ſome radical poſtulate, from the branches which art has engrafted on it. The accidental preſcriptions of authority, when time has procured them veneration, are often confounded with the laws of nature, and thoſe rules are ſuppoſed coeval with reaſon, of which the firſt riſe cannot be diſcovered.

CRITICISM has ſometimes permitted fancy to dictate the laws by which fancy ought to be reſtrained, and fallacy to perplex the principles by which fallacy is to be detected, her ſuperintendance of others has betrayed her to negligence of herſelf; and like the antient *Scythians*, by extending her conqueſts over diſtant regions, ſhe has left her throne vacant to her ſlaves.

AMONG the laws which the deſire of extending authority, or ardour of promoting knowledge, has prompted men of different abilities to preſcribe, all which writers have received, had not the ſame original right to our regard. Some are to be conſidered as fundamental and indiſpenſable, others only as uſeful and convenient; ſome as dictated by reaſon and neceſſity, others as enacted by deſ-

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potick antiquity; ſome as invincibly ſupported by their conformity to the order of nature and operations of the intellect; others as formed by accident, or inſtituted by example, and therefore always liable to diſpute and alteration.

THAT many rules have been advanced without conſulting nature or reaſon, we cannot but ſuſpect, when we find it peremptorily decreed by the antient maſters, that *only three ſpeaking perſonages ſhould appear at once upon the ſtage*, a law which, as the variety and intricacy of modern plays has made it impoſſible to be obſerved, we now violate without ſcruple, and as experience proves without inconvenience.

THE original of this precept was merely accidental. Tragedy was a monody or ſolitary ſong in honour of *Bacchus*, improved afterwards into a dialogue by the addition of another ſpeaker; but the antients remembering that the tragedy was at firſt pronounced only by one, durſt not for ſome time venture beyond two; at laſt when cuſtom and impunity had made them daring, they extended

their liberty to the admiſſion of three, but reſtrained themſelves by a critical edict from further exorbitance.

By what accident the number of acts was limited to five, I know not that any author has informed us; but certainly it is not determined by any neceſſity ariſing either from the nature of action or propriety of exhibition. An act is only the repreſentation of ſuch a part of the buſineſs of the play as proceeds in an unbroken tenor, or without any intermediate pauſe. Nothing is more evident than that of every real, and by conſequence of every dramatick action, the intervals may be more or fewer than five; and indeed the rule is upon the *Engliſh* ſtage every day broken in effect, without any other miſchief than that which ariſes from an abſurd endeavour to obſerve it in appearance. When the ſcene is ſhifted the act ceaſes, ſince ſome time is neceſſarily ſuppoſed to elapſe while the perſonages of the drama change their place.

With no greater right to our obedience have the criticks confined the dramatic action

tion to a certain number of hours. Probability requires that the time of action ſhould approach ſomewhat nearly to that of exhibition, and thoſe plays will always be thought moſt happily conducted which croud the greateſt variety into the leaſt ſpace. But ſince it will frequently happen that ſome deluſion muſt be admitted, I know not where the limits of imagination can be fixed. It is rarely obſerved that minds not prepoſſeſſed by mechanical criticiſm feel any offence from the extenſion of the intervals between the acts; nor can I conceive it abſurd or impoſſible, that he who can multiply three hours into twelve or twenty-four, might image with equal eaſe a greater number.

I KNOW not whether he that profeſſes to regard no other laws than thoſe of nature, will not be inclined to receive tragi-comedy to his protection, whom, however generally condemned, her own laurels have hitherto ſhaded from the fulminations of criticiſm. For what is there in the mingled drama which impartial reaſon can condemn? the connexion of important with trivial incidents, ſince it is not only common but perpetual in the

world, may ſurely be allowed upon the ſtage, which pretends only to be the mirrour of life. The impropriety of ſuppreſſing paſſions before we have raiſed them to the intended agitation, and of diverting the expectation from an event which we keep ſuſpended only to raiſe it, may be ſpeciouſly urged. But will not experience ſhew this objection to be rather ſubtle than juſt? is it not certain that the tragic and comic affections have been moved alternately with equal force, and that no plays have oftner filled the eye with tears and the breaſt with palpitation, than thoſe which are variegated with interludes of mirth?

I DO not however think it ſafe to judge of works of genius merely by the event. Theſe reſiſtleſs viciſſitudes of the heart, this alternate prevalence of merriment and ſolemnity may ſometimes be more properly aſcribed to the vigour of the writer than the juſtneſs of the deſign: And inſtead of vindicating tragi-comedy by the ſucceſs of *Shakeſpear*, we ought perhaps to pay new honours to that tranſcendent and unbounded genius that could preſide over the paſſions in ſport; who

who to actuate the affections, needed not the ſlow gradation of common means, but could fill the heart with inſtantaneous jollity or ſorrow, and vary our diſpoſition as he changed his ſcenes. Perhaps the effects even of *Shakeſpear*'s poetry might have been yet greater, had he not counter-acted himſelf; and we might have been more intereſted in the diſtreſſes of his heroes had we not been ſo frequently diverted by the jokes of his buffoons.

THERE are other rules more fixed and obligatory. It is neceſſary that of every play the chief action ſhould be ſingle; for ſince a play repreſents ſome tranſaction, through its regular maturation to its final event, two actions equally important muſt evidently conſtitute two plays.

As the deſign of tragedy is to inſtruct by moving the paſſions, it muſt always have a hero, a perſonage apparently and inconteſtably ſuperior to the reſt, upon whom the attention may be fixed and the anxiety ſuſpended. For though if two perſons oppoſing each other with equal abilities and equal

virtue, the auditor will inevitably in time chooſe his favourite, yet as that choice muſt be without any cogency of conviction, the hopes or fears which it raiſes will be faint and languid. Of two heroes acting in confederacy againſt a common enemy, the virtues or dangers will give little emotion, becauſe each claims our concern with the ſame right, and the heart lies at reſt between equal motives.

It ought to be the firſt endeavour of a writer to diſtinguiſh nature from cuſtom, or that which is eſtabliſhed becauſe it is right, from that which is right only becauſe it is eſtabliſhed; that he may neither violate eſſential principles by a deſire of novelty, nor debar himſelf from the attainment of beauties within his view by a needleſs fear of breaking rules which no literary dictator had authority to enact.

NUMB. 157. TUESDAY, *Sept.* 17, 1751.

——— Οἱ ἀιδὼς
Γίγνεται, ἢ ἄνδρας μέγα σίνεται ἠδ' ὀνίνησι.

HOM.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH one of your correſpondents has preſumed to mention with ſome contempt that preſence of attention and eaſineſs of addreſs, which the polite have long agreed to celebrate and eſteem, yet I cannot be perſuaded to think them unworthy of regard or cultivation; but am inclined to believe that, as we ſeldom value rightly what we have never known the miſery of wanting, his judgment has been vitiated by his happineſs; and that a natural exuberance of aſſurance has hindered him from diſcovering its excellence and uſe.

THIS felicity, whether beſtowed by conſtitution, or obtained by early habitudes, I can ſcarcely contemplate without envy. I was bred under a man of learning in the country, who having little acquaintance with gran-

grandeur or pleaſure, inculcated nothing but the dignity of knowledge, and the happineſs of virtue. By frequency of admonition, and confidence of aſſertion, he prevailed upon me to believe, that at my firſt entrance into the world, the ſplendor of literature would be ſufficient to attract reverence, if it was not darkened by corruption. I therefore purſued my ſtudies with inceſſant induſtry, and avoided every thing which I had been taught to conſider either as vicious or tending to vice, becauſe I regarded guilt and reproach as inſeparably united, and thought a tainted reputation the greateſt calamity.

At the univerſity, I found no reaſon for changing my opinion, for though many among my fellow ſtudents took the opportunity of a more remiſs diſcipline to gratify their paſſions; yet virtue preſerved her natural ſuperiority, and thoſe who ventured to neglect were not ſuffered to inſult her. The ambition of petty accompliſhments found its way into the receptacles of learning, but was obſerved to ſeize commonly on thoſe who either neglected the ſciences or could not attain them; and I was therefore confirmed

ed in the doctrines of my old maſter, and thought nothing worthy of my care but the means of gaining or imparting knowledge.

THIS purity of manners, and intenſeneſs of application ſoon extended my renown beyond my own college, and I was applauded by thoſe, whoſe opinion I then thought unlikely to deceive me, as a young man that gave uncommon hopes of future eminence. My performances in time reached my native province, and my relations congratulated themſelves upon the new honours that were added to their family.

I RETURNED home covered with academical laurels, and fraught with criticiſm and philoſophy. The wit and the ſcholar excited curioſity, and my acquaintance was ſolicited by innumerable invitations. To pleaſe will always be the wiſh of benevolence, to be admired muſt be the conſtant aim of ambition; and I therefore conſidered myſelf as about to receive the reward of my honeſt labours, and to find the efficacy of learning and of virtue.

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THE third day after my arrival I dined at the houſe of a gentleman who had ſummoned a multitude of his friends to the annual celebration of his wedding-day. I ſet forward with great exultation, and thought myſelf happy, that I had an opportunity of diſplaying my knowledge to ſo numerous an aſſembly. I felt no ſenſe of my own inſufficiency, till going up ſtairs to the dining-room, I heard the mingled roar of obſtreperous merriment. I was however diſguſted rather than terrified, and went forward without dejection. The whole company roſe at my entrance, but when I ſaw ſo many eyes fixed at once upon me, I was blaſted with a ſudden imbecility, I was quelled by ſome nameleſs power which I found impoſſible to be reſiſted. My ſight was dazzled, my cheeks glowed, my perceptions were confounded; I was harraſſed by the multitude of eager ſalutations, and returned the common civilities with heſitation and impropriety; the ſenſe of my own blunders encreaſed my confuſion, and before the exchange of ceremonies allowed me to ſit down, I was ready to ſink under the oppreſſion of ſurpriſe;

ſurpriſe; my voice grew weak, and my knees trembled.

THE aſſembly then reſumed their places, and I ſat with my eyes fixed upon the ground. To the queſtions of curioſity, or the appeals of complaiſance, I could ſeldom anſwer but with negative monoſyllables, or profeſſions of ignorance; for the ſubjects on which they converſed, were ſuch as are ſeldom diſcuſſed in books, and were therefore out of my range of knowledge. At length an old clergyman, who rightly conjectured the reaſon of my conciſeneſs, relieved me by ſome queſtions about the preſent ſtate of natural knowledge, and engaged me by an appearance of doubt and oppoſition in the explication and defence of the *Newtonian* philoſophy.

THE conſciouſneſs of my own abilities rouſed me from my depreſſion, and long familiarity with my ſubject enabled me to diſcourſe with eaſe and volubility; but however I might pleaſe myſelf, I found very little added by my demonſtrations to the ſatisfaction of the company; and my antagoniſt who knew the laws of converſation too well, to detain

detain their attention long upon an unpleasing topic, after he had commended my acuteneſs and comprehenſion, diſmiſſed the controverſy, and reſigned me to my former inſignificance and perplexity.

After dinner, I received from the ladies, who had heard that I was a wit, an invitation to the tea-table. I congratulated myſelf upon an opportunity to eſcape from the company, whoſe gaiety began to be tumultuous, and among whom ſeveral hints had been dropped of the uſeleſſneſs of univerſities, the folly of book-learning, and the aukwardneſs of ſcholars. To the ladies therefore I flew, as to a refuge from clamour, inſult and ruſticity, but found my heart ſink as I approached their apartment, and was again diſconcerted by the ceremonies of entrance, and confounded by the neceſſity of encountering ſo many eyes at once.

When I ſat down I conſidered that ſomething pretty was always ſaid to ladies, and reſolved to recover my credit by ſome elegant obſervation or graceful compliment. I applied myſelf to the recollection of all that

that I had read or heard in praiſe of beauty, and endeavoured to accommodate ſome claſſical compliment to the preſent occaſion. I ſunk into profound meditation, revolved the characters of the heroines of old, conſidered whatever the poets have ſung in their praiſe, and after having borrowed and invented, choſen and rejected a thouſand ſentiments, which, if I had uttered them, would not have been underſtood, I was awakened from my dream of learned gallantry, by the ſervant who diſtributed the tea.

THERE are not many ſituations more inceſſantly uneaſy than that in which the man is placed who is watching an opportunity to ſpeak, without courage to take it when it is offered, and who, tho' he reſolves to give a ſpecimen of his abilities, always finds ſome reaſon or other for delaying it to the next minute. I was aſhamed of ſilence, yet could find nothing to ſay of elegance or importance equal to my wiſhes. The ladies, afraid of my learning, thought themſelves not qualified to propoſe any ſubject of prattle to a man ſo famous for diſpute, and there was nothing on either ſide but impatience and vexation.

In this conflict of ſhame as I was reaſſembling my ſcattered ſentiments, and reſolving to force my imagination to ſome ſprightly ſally, had juſt found a very happy compliment, by too much attention to my own meditations, I ſuffered the ſaucer to drop from my hand. The cup was broken, the lap-dog was ſcalded, a brocaded petticoat was ſtained, and the whole aſſembly was thrown into diſorder. I now conſidered all hopes of reputation as at an end, and while they were conſoling and aſſiſting one another, ſtole away in ſilence.

The miſadventures of this unhappy day are not yet at an end; I am afraid of meeting the meaneſt of them that triumphed over me in this ſtate of ſtupidity and contempt, and feel the ſame terrors encroaching upon my heart at the ſight of thoſe who have once impreſſed them. Shame, above any other paſſion, propagates itſelf. Before thoſe who have ſeen me confuſed, I can never appear without new confuſion, and the remembrance of the weakneſs which I formerly diſcovered, hinders me from acting or ſpeaking with my natural force.

But

But is this Misery, Mr. *Rambler*, never to ceaſe? have I ſpent my life in ſtudy only to become the ſport of the ignorant, and debarred myſelf from all the common enjoyments of youth to collect ideas which muſt ſleep in ſilence, and form opinions which I muſt not divulge? inform me, dear ſir, by what means I may reſcue my faculties from theſe ſhackles of cowardice, how I may riſe to a level with my fellow beings, recall myſelf from this langour of involuntary ſubjection to the free exertion of my intellects, and add to the power of reaſoning the liberty of ſpeech.

I am, Sir, &c.

VERECUNDULUS.

NUMB. 158. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 21, 1751.

Grammatici certant, et adhuc ſub Judice lis eſt.

HOR.

CRITICISM, though dignified from the earlieſt ages by the labours of men eminent for knowledge and ſagacity, and, ſince the revival of polite literature, the favourite ſtudy of *European* ſcholars, has not yet attained the certainty and ſtability of ſcience. The rules hitherto received, are ſeldom drawn from any ſettled principle or ſelf-evident poſtulate, or adapted to the natural and invariable conſtitution of things; but will be found upon examination the arbitrary edicts of legiſlators authoriſed only by themſelves, who out of various means by which the ſame end may be attained, ſelected ſuch as happened to occur to their own reflection, and then by a law which idleneſs and timidity were too willing to obey, prohibited new experiments of wit, reſtrained fancy from the indulgence of her innate inclination to hazard and adventure, and condemned all future flights of genius to purſue the path of the *Meonian* eagle.

THE

THE authority claimed by criticks may be more juſtly oppoſed, as it is apparently derived from them whom they endeavour to controul; for we owe few of the rules of writing to the acuteneſs of thoſe by whom they are delivered, nor have they generally any other merit than that having read the works of great authors with attention, they have obſerved the arrangement of their matter, or the graces of their expreſſion, and then expected honour and reverence for precepts which they never could have invented: So that practice has introduced rules, rather than rules have directed practice.

FOR this reaſon the laws of every ſpecies of writing have been ſettled by the ideas of him who firſt raiſed it to reputation, without enquiry whether his performances were not yet ſuſceptible of improvement. The excellencies and faults of celebrated writers have been equally recommended to poſterity; and ſo far has blind reverence prevailed, that even the number of their books has been thought worthy of imitation.

THE

THE imagination of the firſt authors of lyrick poetry was vehement and rapid, and their knowledge various and extenſive; living in an age when ſcience had been little cultivated, and when the minds of their auditors not being accuſtomed to accurate inſpection, were eaſily dazzled by glaring ideas, they applied themſelves to inſtruct, rather by ſhort ſentences and ſtriking thoughts than by regular argumentation; and finding attention more ſucceſsfully excited by ſudden ſallies and unexpected exclamations, than by the more artful and placid beauties of methodical deduction, they looſed their genius to its own courſe, paſſed from one ſentiment to another without expreſſing the intermediate ideas, and roved at large over the ideal world with ſuch lightneſs and agility that their footſteps are ſcarcely to be traced.

FROM this accidental peculiarity of the antient writers the criticks deduce the rules of lyrick poetry, which they have ſet free from all the laws by which other compoſitions are confined, and allow to neglect the niceties of tranſition, to ſtart into remote digreſſions, and to wander without reſtraint from one ſcene of imagery to another.

A WRITER of later times has by the vivacity of his eſſays, reconciled mankind to the ſame licentiouſneſs in ſhort diſſertations; and he therefore who wants ſkill to form a plan or diligence to purſue it, needs only entitle his performance an eſſay, to acquire the right of heaping together the collections of half his life, without order, coherence, or propriety.

IN writing, as in life, faults are endured without diſguſt when they are aſſociated with tranſcendent merit, and may be ſometimes recommended to weak judgments by the luſtre which they obtain from their union with excellence; but it is the buſineſs of thoſe who preſume to ſuperintend the taſte or morals of mankind, to ſeparate illuſive combinations, and diſtinguiſh that which may be praiſed from that which can only be excuſed. As vices never promote happineſs, though when overpowered by more active and more numerous virtues they cannot totally deſtroy it; ſo confuſion and irregularity produce no beauty, though they cannot always obſtruct the brightneſs of genius and learning. To proceed from one truth to another, and connect

diſtant

distant propoſitions by regular conſequences is the great prerogative of man. Independent and unconnected ſentiments flaſhing upon the mind in quick ſucceſſion may for a time delight by their novelty, but they differ from ſyſtematical reaſoning, as ſingle notes from harmony, as glances of lightening from the radiance of the ſun.

When rules are thus drawn, rather from precedents than reaſon, there is danger not only from the faults of an author, but from the errors of thoſe who criticiſe his works; ſince they may often miſlead their pupils by falſe repreſentations as the *Ciceronians* of the ſixteenth century were betrayed into barbariſms by corrupt copies of their darling writer.

It is eſtabliſhed at preſent, that the proemial lines of a poem, in which the general ſubject is propoſed, muſt always be void of glitter and embelliſhment. "The firſt lines of *Pa-*
"*radiſe Loſt*," ſays *Addiſon*, "are perhaps
"as plain, ſimple and unadorned as any of
"the whole poem, in which particular the
"author has conformed himſelf to the ex-

"ample of *Homer* and the Precept of *Ho-*
"*race.*"

THIS obſervation ſeems to have been made by an implicit adoption of the common opinion without conſideration either of the precept or example. Had *Horace* been conſulted, he would have been found to direct only what ſhould be compriſed in the propoſition, not how it ſhould be expreſſed, and to have commended *Homer* in oppoſition to a meaner poet, not for the gradual elevation of his diction, but the judicious expanſion of his plan, for diſplaying unpromiſed events, not for producing unexpected elegancies.

——— *Specioſa dehinc miracula promit*
Antiphaten Scyllamque, & cum Cyclope Charybdim.

IF the exordial lines of *Homer* be compared with the reſt of the poem, they will not appear remarkable for plainneſs or ſimplicity, but rather eminently adorned and illuminated.

Ἀνδρά μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλὰ
Πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσε·

Πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω.
Πολλὰ δ' ὅγ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμὸν,
Ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε Ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων·
Ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὣς ἑτάρους ἐρρύσσατο ἱέμενός περ
Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρῃσιν ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ὄλοντο,
Νήπιοι οἱ κατὰ βοῦς ὑπερίονος ἠελίοιο
Ἤσθιον· αὐτὰρ ὁ τοῖσιν ἀφείλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.
Τῶν ἀμόθεν γε θεὰ θύγατερ Διὸς εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν.

THE firſt verſes of the *Iliad* are in like manner particularly ſplendid, and the propoſition of the *Eneid* cloſes with dignity and magnificence not often to be found even in the poetry of *Virgil*.

THE Intent of the introduction is to raiſe expectation and ſuſpend it, ſomething therefore muſt be diſcovered and ſomething concealed; and the poet while the fertility of his invention is yet unknown, may properly recommend himſelf by the grace of his language.

HE that reveals too much or promiſes too little, he that never irritates the intellectual appetite, or that immediately ſatiates it, equally defeats his own purpoſe. It is neceſ-

ſary to the pleaſure of the reader, that the events ſhould not be anticipated, and how then can his attention be invited, but by grandeur of expreſſion?

NUMB. 159. TUESDAY, *September* 24, 1751.

Sunt verba et voces, quibus hunc lenire dolorem
Poſſis, et magnam morbi deponere partem. HOR.

THE imbecillity with which *Verecundulus* complains that the preſence of a numerous aſſembly freezes his faculties, is particularly incident to the ſtudious part of mankind, whoſe education neceſſarily ſecludes them in their earlier years from mingled converſe, till at their diſmiſſion from ſchools and academies they plunge at once into the tumult of the world, and coming forth from the gloom of ſolitude are overpowered by the blaze of publick life.

IT is perhaps kindly provided by nature that, as the feathers and ſtrength of a bird grow together, and her wings are not com-

pleted till ſhe is able to fly, ſo ſome proportion ſhould be preſerved in the human kind between judgment and courage; the precipitation of inexperience is therefore reſtrained by ſhame, and we remain ſhackled by timidity, till we have learned to ſpeak and act with propriety.

I BELIEVE few can review the days of their youth, without recollecting temptations, which ſhame, rather than virtue, enabled them to reſiſt; and opinions which, however haſtily conceived and negligently examined, however erroneous in their principles, and dangerous in their conſequences, they have a thouſand times panted to advance at the hazard of contempt and hatred, when they found themſelves irreſiſtibly depreſſed amidſt their eagerneſs and confidence, by a languid anxiety which ſeized them at the moment of utterance, and ſtill gathered ſtrength from their endeavours to reſiſt it.

IT generally happens that aſſurance keeps an even pace with ability, and the fear of miſcarriage, which hinders our firſt attempts, is gradually diſſipated as our ſkill advances towards

towards certainty of ſucceſs. That baſhfulneſs therefore which prevents diſgrace, that ſhort and temporary ſhame which ſecures us from the danger of laſting reproach, cannot be properly counted among our misfortunes.

BASHFULNESS, however it may incommode for a moment, ſcarcely ever produces evils of long continuance; it may fluſh the cheek, flutter in the heart, deject the eyes, and enchain the tongue, but its miſchiefs ſoon paſs off without remembrance. It may ſometimes exclude pleaſure, but ſeldom opens any avenue to ſorrow or remorſe. It is obſerved ſomewhere, that *few have repented of having forborn to ſpeak.*

To excite oppoſition and inflame malevolence is the unhappy privilege of courage made arrogant by conſciouſneſs of ſtrength. No man finds in himſelf any inclination to attack or oppoſe him who confeſſes his ſuperiority by bluſhing in his preſence. Qualities exerted with apparent fearfulneſs, receive applauſe from every voice, and ſupport from every hand. Diffidence may check reſolution and obſtruct performance, but com-

penſates its embarraſſments by more important advantages, it conciliates the proud, and ſoftens the ſevere, averts envy from excellence, and cenſure from miſcarriage.

It may indeed happen that knowledge and virtue remain too long congealed by this frigorifick power, as the principles of vegetation are ſometimes obſtructed by lingering froſts. He that enters late into a publick ſtation, though with all the abilities requiſite to the diſcharge of his duty, will find his powers at firſt impeded by a timidity which he himſelf knows to be vitious, and muſt ſtruggle long againſt dejection and reluctance before he obtains the full command of his own attention, and adds the gracefulneſs of eaſe to the dignity of merit.

For this diſeaſe of the mind, I know not whether any remedies of much efficacy can be found. To adviſe a man unaccuſtomed to the eyes of multitudes to mount a tribunal without perturbation, to tell him whoſe life has paſſed in the ſhades of contemplation, that he muſt not be diſconcerted or perplexed in receiving and returning the compliments

of

of a ſplendid aſſembly, is to adviſe an inhabitant of *Braſil* or *Sumatra*, not to ſhiver at an *Engliſh* winter, or him who has always lived upon a plain to look from a precipice without emotion. It is to ſuppoſe cuſtom inſtantaneouſly controlable by reaſon, and to endeavour to communicate by precept that which only time and habit can beſtow.

He that hopes by philoſophy and contemplation alone to fortify himſelf againſt that awe which all at their firſt appearance on the ſtage of life, muſt feel from the ſpectators, will, at the hour of need, be mocked by his reſolution; and I doubt whether the preſervatives which *Plato* relates *Alcibiades* to have received from *Socrates*, when he was about to ſpeak in publick, proved ſufficient to ſecure him from the powerful faſcination.

Yet as the effects of time may by art and induſtry be accelerated or retarded, it cannot be improper to conſider by what motives to confidence and firmneſs this troubleſome inſtinct may be oppoſed when it exceeds its juſt proportion, and inſtead of repreſſing petulance

tulance and temerity ſilences eloquence, and debilitates force. Since though it cannot be hoped that anxiety ſhould be immediately diſſipated, it may be at leaſt ſomewhat abated; and the paſſions will neceſſarily operate with leſs violence, when reaſon riſes againſt them, than while ſhe either ſlumbers in neutrality, or, miſtaking her intereſt lends them her aſſiſtance.

No cauſe more frequently produces baſhfulneſs than too high an opinion of our own importance. He that imagines an aſſembly filled with ideas of his genius, panting with expectation, and huſhed with attention, eaſily terrifies himſelf with the dread of diſappointing them, and ſtrains his imagination in purſuit of ſomething worthy of their notice; ſomething that may vindicate the veracity of fame, and ſhow that his reputation was not gained by chance. He conſiders, that what he ſhall ſay or do will never be forgotten; that renown or infamy are ſuſpended upon every ſyllable, and that nothing ought to fall from him which will not bear the teſt of time. Under ſuch ſolicitude, who can wonder that the mind is overwhelmed,

med, and by ſtruggling with attempts above her ſtrength, quickly ſinks into languiſhment and deſpondency.

THE moſt uſeful medicines are often unpleaſing to the taſte. Thoſe who are oppreſſed by their own reputation, will perhaps not be comforted by hearing that their cares are unneceſſary. But the truth is, that no man is much regarded by the reſt of the world, except where the intereſt of others is involved in his fortune. He that conſiders how little he dwells upon the condition of others, will learn how little the attention of others is attracted by himſelf. While we ſee multitudes paſſing before us, of whom perhaps not one appears to deſerve our notice, or excites our ſympathy, we ſhould remember, that we likewiſe are loſt in the ſame throng, that the eye which happens to glance upon us is turned in a moment on him that follows us, and that the utmoſt which we can reaſonably hope or fear is to fill a vacant hour with prattle and be forgotten.

NUMB. 160. SATURDAY, *Sept.* 28, 1751.

——— *Inter ſe convenit urſis.*

JUV.

"THE world," ſays *Locke*, "has peo-
"ple of all ſorts." As in the general hurry produced by the ſuperfluities of ſome, and neceſſities of others, no man needs to ſtand ſtill for want of employment, ſo in the innumerable gradations of ability, and endleſs varieties of ſtudy and inclination, no employment can be vacant for want of a man qualified to diſcharge it.

SUCH is probably the natural ſtate of the univerſe, but it is ſo much deformed by intereſt and paſſion, that the benefit of this adaptation of men to things is not always perceived. The folly of thoſe who ſet their ſervices to ſale, inclines them to boaſt of qualifications which they do not poſſeſs, and to attempt buſineſs which they do not underſtand; and they who have the power of aſſigning to others the taſk of life, are ſeldom honeſt or ſeldom happy in their nomi-

nations.

nations. Patrons are ſometimes corrupted by avarice, and ſometimes cheated by credulity; ſometimes overpowered by reſiſtleſs ſolicitation, and ſometimes too ſtrongly influenced by the honeſt prejudices of friendſhip, or the prevalence of virtuous compaſſion. For, whatever cool reaſon may direct, it is not eaſy for a man of tender and ſcrupulous goodneſs to overlook the immediate effect of his own actions by turning his eyes upon their remoter conſequences, and to do that which muſt give preſent pain, for the ſake of obviating ſome evil yet unfelt, or ſecuring ſome advantage in time to come. What is diſtant is in itſelf obſcure, and, when we have no deſire to ſee it, eaſily eſcapes our notice or takes ſuch a form as deſire or imagination beſtows upon it; and he whoſe hopes and fears are buſy in his heart will ſoon find ſome method of accommodating futurity to his ſchemes.

EVERY man might for the ſame reaſon in the multitudes that ſwarm about him, find ſome kindred mind with which he could unite in confidence and friendſhip; yet we ſee many ſtraggling ſingle about the world, un-

unhappy for want of an aſſociate, and pining with the neceſſity of confining their ſentiments to their own boſoms.

THIS inconvenience ariſes in like manner from ſtruggles of the will againſt the underſtanding. It is not often difficult to find a ſuitable companion if every man would be content with ſuch as he is qualified to pleaſe. But if vanity tempts him to forſake his rank and poſt himſelf among thoſe with whom no common intereſt or mutual pleaſure can ever unite him, he muſt always live in a ſtate of unſocial ſeparation, without tenderneſs and without truſt.

THERE are many natures which can never approach within a certain diſtance, and which when any irregular motive impels them towards contact, ſeem to ſtart back from each other by ſome invincible repulſion. There are others which immediately cohere whenever they come into the reach of mutual attraction, and with very little formality of preparation mingle intimately as ſoon as they meet. Every man whom either buſineſs or curioſity has thrown at large into the

the world, will recollect many inſtances of fondneſs and diſlike, which have forced themſelves upon him without the intervention of his Judgment; of diſpoſitions, to court ſome and avoid others, when he could aſſign no reaſon for the preference, or none adequate to the violence of his paſſions; of influence that acted inſtantaneouſly upon his mind, and which no arguments or perſuaſions could ever overcome.

AMONG thoſe with whom time and intercourſe have made us familiar, we feel our affections divided in different proportions without much regard to moral or intellectual merit. Every man knows ſome whom he cannot induce himſelf to truſt, though he has no reaſon to ſuſpect that they would betray him; thoſe to whom he cannot complain though he never obſerved them to want compaſſion; thoſe in whoſe preſence he never can be gay though excited by a thouſand invitations to mirth and freedom; and thoſe from whom he cannot be content to receive inſtruction, though they never inſulted his ignorance by contempt or oſtentation.

THAT

That much regard is to be had to thoſe inſtincts of kindneſs and diſlike, or that reaſon ſhould blindly follow them, I am far from intending to inculcate. It is very certain that by indulgence we may give them ſtrength which they have not from nature, and almoſt every example of ingratitude and treachery proves that by obeying them we may commit our happineſs to thoſe who are very unworthy of ſo great a truſt. But it may deſerve to be remarked, that ſince few contend much with their inclinations, it is generally vain to ſolicit the good will of thoſe whom we perceive thus involuntarily alienated from us; neither knowledge nor virtue will reconcile antipathy, and though officiouſneſs may for a time be admitted, and diligence applauded, they will at laſt be diſmiſſed with coldneſs or diſcouraged by neglect.

Some have indeed an occult power of ſtealing upon the affections, of exciting univerſal benevolence, and diſpoſing every heart to fondneſs and friendſhip. But this is a felicity granted only to the favourites of nature.

nature. The greater part of mankind find a different reception from different diſpoſitions; they ſometimes obtain unexpected careſſes and diſtinctions from thoſe whom they never flattered with any uncommon regard, and ſometimes exhauſt all their arts of pleaſing without effect. To theſe it is neceſſary to look round with vigilance, and attempt every breaſt in which they find virtue ſufficient for the foundation of friendſhip; to enter into the crowd and try whom chance will offer to their notice till they fix on ſome temper congenial to their own, as the magnet rolled in the duſt collects the fragments of its kindred metal from a thouſand particles of other ſubſtances.

Every man muſt have remarked the facility with which the kindneſs of others is ſometimes gained by thoſe to whom he never could have imparted his own. We are by our occupations, education and habits of life divided almoſt into different ſpecies, which regard one another for the moſt part with ſcorn and malignity. Each of theſe claſſes of the human race has deſires, fears, and converſation, vexations and merriment peculiar to itſelf; cares which another cannot feel; pleaſures which he cannot partake; and

and modes of expreſſing every ſenſation which he cannot underſtand. That frolick which ſhakes one man with laughter will convulſe another with indignation; the ſtrain of jocularity which in one place obtains treats and patronage, would in another be heard with indifference, and in a third with abhorrence.

To raiſe eſteem we muſt benefit others, to procure love we muſt pleaſe them. *Ariſtotle*, that great maſter of human nature obſerves, that old men do not readily form friendſhips, becauſe they are not eaſily ſuſceptible of pleaſure. He that can contribute to the hilarity of the vacant hour, or partake with equal guſt the favourite amuſement, he whoſe mind is employed on the ſame objects, and who therefore never harraſſes the underſtanding with unaccuſtomed ideas, will be always welcomed with ardour, and left with regret, unleſs he deſtroys thoſe advantages by faults with which peace and ſecurity cannot conſiſt.

He therefore that would gain a patron muſt adopt his inclination; but the greateſt part

part of human pleaſures approach ſo nearly to the borders of vice, that few who make the delight of others their rule of conduct are able to avoid ſuch compliances as virtue cannot approve; yet certainly he that purchaſes favour by proſtitution miſtakes his own intereſt, ſince he gains friendſhip by means, for which his friend, if ever he becomes wiſe, muſt ſcorn him, and for which at laſt he muſt ſcorn himſelf.

NUMB. 161. TUESDAY, *October* 1, 1751.

Οἵη γὰρ φύλλων γενίη, τοίηδε καὶ Ἀνδρῶν.

HOM.

Mr. RAMBLER,

SIR,

YOU have formerly obſerved that curioſity often terminates in barren knowledge, and that the mind is prompted to ſtudy and enquiry rather by the uneaſineſs of ignorance, than the hope of profit. Nothing can be of leſs importance to any preſent intereſt

tereſt than the fortune of thoſe who have been long loſt in the grave, and from whom nothing now can be hoped or feared. Yet to rouſe the zeal of a true antiquary little more is neceſſary than to mention a name which mankind have conſpired to forget; he will make his way to remote ſcenes of action through obſcurity and contradiction, as *Tully* ſought amidſt buſhes and brambles the tomb of *Archimedes*.

It is not eaſy to diſcover how it concerns him that gathers the produce or receives the rent of an eſtate, to know through what families the land has paſſed, who is regiſtered in the conqueror's ſurvey as its poſſeſſor, how often it has been forfeited by treaſon, or how often ſold by prodigality. The power or wealth of the preſent inhabitants of a country cannot be much encreaſed by an enquiry after the names of thoſe barbarians, who deſtroyed one another twenty centuries ago, in conteſts for the ſhelter of woods or convenience of paſturage. Yet we ſee that no man can be at reſt in the enjoyment of a new purchaſe till he has learned the hiſtory of his grounds from the antient inhabitants

of

of the pariſh, and that no nation omits to record the actions of their anceſtors, however bloody, ſavage and rapacious.

THE ſame diſpoſition as different opportunities call it forth, diſcovers itſelf in great or in little things. I have always thought it unworthy of a wiſe man to ſlumber in total inactivity only becauſe he happens to have no employment equal to his ambition or genius; it is therefore my cuſtom to apply my attention to the objects before me, and as I cannot think any place wholly unworthy of notice that affords a habitation to a man of letters, I have collected the hiſtory and antiquities of the ſeveral garrets in which I have reſided.

Quantulacunque eſtis, vos ego magna voco.

MANY of theſe narratives my induſtry has been able to extend to a conſiderable length; but the woman with whom I now lodge has lived only eighteen months in the houſe, and can give no account of its antient revolutions; the plaiſterer having, at her entrance, obliterated by his white-waſh, all the ſmoky

ſmoky memorials which former tenants had left upon the cieling, and perhaps drawn the veil of oblivion over politicians, philoſophers and poets.

When I firſt cheapened my lodgings, the landlady told me, that ſhe hoped I was not an author, for the lodgers on the firſt floor had ſtipulated that the upper rooms ſhould not be occupied by a noiſy trade. I very readily promiſed to give no diſturbance to her family, and ſoon diſpatched a bargain on the uſual terms.

I had not ſlept many nights in my new apartment before I began to enquire after my predeceſſors, and found my landlady, whoſe imagination is filled chiefly with her own affairs, very ready to give me information.

Curiosity, like all other deſires, produces pain, as well as pleaſure. Before ſhe began her narrative, I had heated my head with expectations of adventures and diſcoveries, of elegance in diſguiſe and learning in diſtreſs, and was ſomewhat mortified when

when I heard, that the firſt tenant was a taylor, of whom nothing was remembred but that he complained of his room for want of light; and, after having lodged in it a month, and paid only a week's rent, pawned a piece of cloth which he was truſted to cut out, and was forced to make a precipitate retreat from this quarter of the town.

THE next was a young woman newly arrived from the country, who lived for five weeks with great regularity, and became by frequent treats very much the favourite of the family, but at laſt received viſits ſo frequently from a couſin in *Cheapſide*, that ſhe brought the reputation of the houſe into danger, and was therefore diſmiſſed with good advice.

THE room then ſtood empty for a fortnight; my landlady began to think that ſhe had judged hardly, and often wiſhed for ſuch another lodger. At laſt an elderly man of a grave aſpect, read the bill, and bargained for the room, at the very firſt price that was aſked. He lived in cloſe retirement, ſeldom went out till evening, and then

then returned early, ſometimes chearful, and at other times dejected. It was remarkable, that whatever he purchaſed, he never had ſmall money in his pocket, and though cool and temperate on other occaſions, was always vehement and ſtormy till he received his change. He paid his rent with great exactneſs, and ſeldom failed once a week to requite my landlady's civility with a ſupper. At laſt, ſuch is the fate of human felicity, the houſe was alarmed at midnight by the conſtable, who demanded to ſearch the garrets. My landlady aſſuring him that he had miſtaken the door, conducted him up ſtairs, where he found the tools of a coiner; but the tenant had crawled along the roof to an empty houſe, and eſcaped; much to the joy of my landlady, who declares him a very honeſt man, and wonders why any body ſhould be hanged for making money when ſuch numbers are in want of it. She however confeſſes that ſhe ſhall for the future always queſtion the character of thoſe who take her garret without beating down the price.

The bill was then placed again in the window, and the poor woman was teazed for

for ſeven weeks by innumerable paſſengers, who obliged her to climb with them every hour up five ſtories, and then diſliked the proſpect, hated the noiſe of a publick ſtreet, thought the ſtairs narrow, objected to a low ceiling, required the walls to be hung with freſher paper, aſked queſtions about the neighbourhood, could not think of living ſo far from their acquaintance, wiſhed the window had looked to the ſouth rather than the weſt, told how the door and chimney might have been better diſpoſed, bid her half the price that ſhe aſked, or promiſed to give her earneſt the next day, and came no more.

At laſt, a ſhort meagre man, in a tarniſhed waiſtcoat, deſired to ſee the garret, and when he had ſtipulated for two long ſhelves and a larger table, hired it at a low rate. When the affair was compleated, he looked round him with great ſatisfaction, and repeated ſome words which the woman did not underſtand. In two days he brought a great box of books, took poſſeſſion of his room, and lived very inoffenſively, except that he frequently diſturbed the inhabitants of the next floor by unſeaſonable noiſes. He was

generally

generally in bed at noon, but from evening to midnight he ſometimes talked aloud with great vehemence, ſometimes ſtamped as in rage, ſometimes threw down his poker, then clattered his chairs, then ſat down in deep thought, and again burſt out into loud vociferations; ſometimes he would ſigh as oppreſſed with miſery, and ſometimes ſhake with convulſive laughter. When he encountered any of the family he gave way or bowed, but rarely ſpoke, except that as he went up ſtairs he often repeated,

——— Ὃς ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίει,

hard words, to which his neighbours liſtened ſo often, that they learned them without underſtanding them. What was his employment ſhe did not venture to aſk him, but at laſt heard a printer's boy enquire for the author.

My landlady was very often adviſed to beware of this ſtrange man, who though he was quiet for the preſent, might perhaps become outrageous in the hot months; but as ſhe was punctually paid, ſhe could not find any ſufficient

cient reaſon for diſmiſſing him, till one night he convinced her by ſetting fire to his curtains, that it was not ſafe to have an author for her inmate.

She had then for ſix weeks a ſucceſſion of tenants, who left the houſe on Saturday, and inſtead of paying their rent, ſtormed at their landlady. At laſt ſhe took in two ſiſters, one of whom had ſpent her little fortune in procuring remedies for a lingering diſeaſe, and was now ſupported and attended by the other: ſhe climbed with difficulty to the apartment, where ſhe languiſhed eight weeks without impatience or lamentation, except for the expence and fatigue which her ſiſter ſuffered, and then calmly and contentedly expired. The ſiſter followed her to the grave, paid the few debts which they had contracted, wiped away the tears of uſeleſs ſorrow, and returning to the buſineſs of common life, reſigned to me the vacant habitation.

Such, Mr. *Rambler*, are the changes which have happened in the narrow ſpace

where my preſent fortune has fixed my reſidence. So true is it that amuſement and inſtruction are always at hand for thoſe who have ſkill and willingneſs to find them; and ſo juſt is the obſervation of *Juvenal*, that a ſingle houſe will ſhew whatever is done or ſuffered in the world.

I am, Sir, &c.

NUMB.

NUMB. 162. SATURDAY, *October* 5, 1751.

Orbus es, & locuples, & Bruto conſule natus,
Eſſe tibi veras credis amicitias?
Sunt veræ; ſed quas Juvenis, quas pauper habebas,
Quis novus eſt, mortem diligit ille tuam.

MART.

ONE of the complaints uttered by *Milton*'s *Sampſon*, in the anguiſh of blindneſs, is, that he ſhall paſs his life under the direction of others; that he cannot regulate his conduct by his own knowledge, but muſt lie at the mercy of thoſe who undertake to guide him.

THERE is no ſtate more contrary to the dignity of wiſdom than perpetual and unlimited dependence, in which the underſtanding lies uſeleſs, and every motion is received from external impulſe. Reaſon is the great diſtinction of human nature, the faculty by which we approach to ſome degree of aſſociation with celeſtial intelligences; but as the excellence of every power appears only

in its operations, not to have reaſon, and to have it uſeleſs and unemployed, is nearly the ſame.

SUCH is the weakneſs of man that the eſſence of things is ſeldom ſo much regarded as external and accidental appendages. A ſmall variation of trivial circumſtances, a ſlight change of form by an artificial dreſs, or a caſual difference of appearance by a new light and ſituation will conciliate affection or excite abhorrence, and determine us to purſue or to avoid. Every man conſiders a neceſſity of compliance with any will but his own, as the loweſt ſtate of ignominy and meanneſs; few are ſo far loſt in cowardice or negligence as not to rouſe at the firſt inſult of tyranny, and exert all their force againſt him who uſurps their property, or invades any privilege of ſpeech or action. Yet we often ſee thoſe who never wanted ſpirit to repel encroachment or oppoſe violence, at laſt by a gradual relaxation of vigilance, delivering up, without capitulation, the fortreſs which they defended againſt aſſault, and laying down unbidden the weapons which they graſped the harder

for

for every attempt to wreſt them from their hands. Men eminent for ſpirit and wiſdom often reſign themſelves to voluntary pupillage, and ſuffer their lives to be modelled by officious ignorance, and their choice to be regulated by preſumptuous ſtupidity.

THIS unreſiſting acquieſcence in the determination of others may be the conſequence of application to ſome ſtudy remote from the beaten track of life, ſome employment which does not allow leiſure for ſufficient inſpection of thoſe petty affairs, by which nature has decreed a great part of our duration to be filled. To a mind thus withdrawn from common objects it is more eligible to repoſe on the prudence of another than to be expoſed every moment to trivial interruptions. The ſubmiſſion which ſuch confidence requires is paid without pain, becauſe it implies no confeſſion of inferiority. The buſineſs from which we withdraw our cognizance, is not above our abilities, but below our notice. We pleaſe our pride with the effects of our influence thus weakly exerted, and fancy ourſelves placed in a higher orb, from which we regulate ſubordinate

agents by a ſlight and diſtant ſuperintendence. But, whatever vanity or abſtraction may ſuggeſt, no man can ſafely do that by others which might be done by himſelf; he that indulges negligence will quickly become ignorant of his own affairs; and he that truſts without reſerve will at laſt be deceived.

It is however impoſſible, but that as the attention tends ſtrongly towards one thing it muſt retire from another; and he that omits the care of domeſtick buſineſs becauſe he is engroſſed by enquiries of more importance to mankind, has at leaſt the merit of ſuffering in a good cauſe. But there are many who can plead no ſuch extenuation of their folly; who ſhake off the burthen of their ſtation, not that they may ſoar with leſs encumbrance to the heights of knowledge or virtue, but that they may loiter at eaſe and ſleep in quiet; and who ſelect for friendſhip and confidence not the faithful and the virtuous, but the ſoft, the civil, and compliant.

This openneſs to flattery is the common diſgrace of declining life. When men feel weakneſs

weakneſs encreaſing on them, they naturally deſire to reſt from the ſtruggles of contradiction, the fatigue of reaſoning, and the anxiety of circumſpection; when they are hourly tormented with pains and diſeaſes, they are unable to bear any new diſturbance, and conſider all oppoſition as an addition to miſery, of which they feel already more than they can patiently endure. Thus deſirous of peace, and thus fearful of pain, the old man ſeldom enquires after any other qualities in thoſe whom he careſſes, than quickneſs in conjecturing his deſires, activity in ſupplying his wants, dexterity in intercepting complaints or remonſtrances before they approach near enough to diſturb him, flexibility to his preſent humour, ſubmiſſion to haſty petulance, and attention to weariſome narrations. By theſe arts alone many have been able to defeat the claims of kindred and of merit, and to enrich themſelves with preſents and legacies.

THRASYBULUS inherited a large fortune from his anceſtors, and augmented it by a marriage with an heireſs, and the revenues of ſeveral lucrative employments, which he

diſcharged with honour and dexterity. He was at laſt wiſe enough to conſider, that life ſhould not be devoted wholly to accumulation, and therefore reſigned his employments, and retiring to his eſtate, applied himſelf to the education of his children, and the cultivation of domeſtick happineſs.

He paſſed ſeveral years in this pleaſing amuſement, and ſaw his care amply recompenſed; his daughters were celebrated for modeſty and elegance, and his ſons for learning, prudence and ſpirit. In time the eagerneſs, with which the neighbouring gentlemen courted his alliance, obliged him to reſign his daughters to other families; the vivacity and curioſity of his ſons, hurried them out of rural privacy into the open world, from whence they had not ſoon an inclination to return. This however was no more than he had always hoped; he pleaſed himſelf with the ſucceſs of his ſchemes, and felt no inconvenience from ſolitude till an apoplexy deprived him of his wife.

THRASYBULUS had now no companion; and the maladies of encreaſing years having

having taken from him much of the power of procuring amuſement for himſelf, he thought it neceſſary to procure ſome inferior friend, who might eaſe him of his economical ſolicitudes, and divert him by chearful converſation. He ſoon recollected all theſe qualities in *Vafer*, a clerk in one of the offices over which he had formerly preſided. *Vafer* was invited to viſit his old patron, and being by his ſtation neceſſarily acquainted with the preſent modes of life, and by conſtant practice dexterous in buſineſs, entertained him with ſo many novelties, and ſo readily diſentangled his affairs, that his preſence was thought the principal conſtituent of happineſs; he was deſired to reſign his clerkſhip, and accept a liberal ſalary in the houſe of *Thraſybulus*.

VAFER having always lived in a ſtate of dependance, was well verſed in the arts by which favour is obtained, and being long accuſtomed to repreſs all ſtarts of reſentment and ſallies of confidence, could without repugnance or heſitation accommodate himſelf to every caprice, adopt every opinion, and echo every aſſertion. He never doubted but

to be convinced, nor attempted oppoſition but to flatter *Thraſybulus* with the opinion of a victory. By this practice he found his way quickly into the heart of his patron, and having firſt made himſelf agreeable, ſoon became important. His inſidious diligence by which the lazineſs of age was gratified, ſoon engroſſed the management of affairs; and his warm profeſſions of kindneſs, petty offices of civility, and occaſional interceſſions, perſuaded the tenants to conſider him as their friend and benefactor, to conſult him in all their ſchemes, and to entreat his enforcement of their repreſentations of hard years, and his countenance to petitions for abatement of rent.

THRASYBULUS had now banquetted on flattery, till he could no longer bear the harſhneſs of remonſtrance or the inſipidity of truth. All contrariety to his own opinion ſhocked him like a violation of ſome natural right, and all recommendation of his affairs to his own inſpection was dreaded by him as a ſummons to torture. His children were alarmed by the ſudden riches of *Vafer*, but their complaints were heard by their father with

with impatience, and their advice rejected with rage, as the reſult of a conſpiracy againſt his quiet, and a deſign to condemn him for their own advantage to groan out his laſt hours in perplexity and drudgery. The daughters retired with tears in their eyes, but the ſon continued his importunities till he found his inheritance hazarded by his obſtinacy. *Vafer* having thus triumphed over all their efforts, and continuing to confirm himſelf in authority and encreaſe his acquiſitions, at the death of his maſter purchaſed an eſtate, and bad defiance to enquiry and juſtice.

NUMB. 163. TUESDAY, *October* 8, 1751.

Mitte ſuperba pati faſtidia, ſpemque caducam
Deſpice; vive tibi, nam moriere tibi.

SENECA.

NONE of the cruelties exerciſed by wealth and power upon indigence and dependance, is more miſchievous in its conſequences, or more frequently practiſed with wanton negligence, than the encouragement of expectations which are never to be gratified,

fied, and the elation and depreſſion of the heart by needleſs viciſſitudes of hope and diſappointment.

EVERY man is rich or poor, according to the proportion between his deſires and enjoyments; any enlargement of wiſhes is therefore equally deſtructive to happineſs with the diminution of poſſeſſion, and he that teaches another to long for what he never ſhall obtain, is no leſs an enemy to his quiet than if he had robbed him of part of his patrimony.

BUT repreſentations thus refined exhibit no adequate idea of the guilt of pretended friendſhip; of artifices by which followers are attracted only to decorate the retinue of pomp, and ſwell the ſhout of popularity, and to be diſmiſſed with contempt and ignomony when their officiouſneſs is no longer uſeful, when their leader has ſucceeded or miſcarried, when he is ſick of ſhow and weary of noiſe. While a man, infatuated with the promiſes of greatneſs, waſtes his hours and days in attendance and ſolicitation, the honeſt opportunities of improving his condition paſs

paſs by without his notice; he neglects to cultivate his own barren ſoil, becauſe he expects every moment to be placed in regions of ſpontaneous fertility, and is ſeldom rouſed from his deluſion, but by the gripe of diſtreſs which he cannot reſiſt, and the ſenſe of evils which cannot be remedied.

THE puniſhment of *Tantalus* in the infernal regions affords a very juſt image of hungry ſervility, flattered with the approach of advantage, doomed to loſe it before it comes into his reach, always within a few days of felicity, and always ſinking back to his former wants.

Καὶ μὲν Τάνταλον εἰσεῖδον χαλεπ' ἄλγε' ἔχοντα
Ἑστάοτ, ἐν λίμνῃ, ἡ δὲ προσέπλαζε γενείῳ·
Στεῦτο δὲ διψάων· πιέειν δ' οὐκ εἶχεν ἕλεσθαι.
Ὁσσάκι γὰρ κῦψει ὁ γέρων πιέειν μενεαίνων,
Τοσσάχ' ὕδωρ ἀχολέσκετ ἀναβροχθὲν· ἀμφὶ δὲ ποσσὶ
Γαῖα μέλαινα φάνεσκε· καταζήνασκε δὲ δαίμων.
Δένδρεα δ' ὑψιπέτηλα καλαχρῆθεν χέε καρπὸν.
Ὄχναι, ἠ ἐροιαὶ, ἠ μηλέαι αγλαόκαρποι.
Συκᾶι τέ γλυκεραὶ, ἠ ἐλᾶιαι τηλεθόωσαι.
Τῶν ὁππότ' ἰθύσει ὁ γέρων ἐπὶ χερσὶ μάσασθαι
Τὰς δ' ἄνεμος ῥίπασκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκιόεντα.

"I

" I ſaw," ſays *Homer*'s *Ulyſſes*, " the ſe-
" vere puniſhment of *Tantalus*. In a lake
" whoſe waters approached to his lips, he
" ſtood burning with thirſt, without the
" power to drink. Whenever he inclined
" his head to the ſtream ſome deity com-
" manded it to be dry, and the dark earth
" appeared at his feet. Around him lofty
" trees ſpread their fruits to view; the pear,
" the pomegranate, and the apple, the green
" olive, and the luſcious fig quivered be-
" fore him, which whenever he extended
" his hand to ſeize them, were ſnatched by
" the winds into clouds and obſcurity."

THIS image of miſery was perhaps origi-nally ſuggeſted to ſome poet by the conduct of his patron, by the daily contemplation of ſplendor which he never muſt partake, by fruitleſs attempts to catch at interdicted happineſs, and by the ſudden evaneſcence of his reward when he thought his labours almoſt at an end. To groan with poverty, when all about him was opulence, riot, and ſuperfluity, and to find the favours which he had long been encouraged to hope, and had long endeavoured to deſerve, ſquandered at laſt on nameleſs

nameleſs ignorance, was to thirſt with water flowing before him, and to ſee the fruits to which his hunger was haſtening, ſcattered by the wind. Nor can my correſpondent, whatever he may have ſuffered, expreſs with more juſtneſs or force the vexations of dependance.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of thoſe mortals who have been courted and envied as the favourites of the great. Having often gained the prize of compoſition at the univerſity, I began to hope that I ſhould obtain the ſame diſtinction in every other place, and determin'd to forſake the profeſſion to which I was deſtined by my parents, and in which the intereſt of my family would have procured me a very advantageous ſettlement. The pride of wit fluttered in my heart, and when I prepared to leave the college, nothing entered my imagination but honours, careſſes, and rewards, riches without labour, and luxury without expence.

I HOW-

I HOWEVER delayed my departure for a time to finiſh the performance by which I was to draw the firſt notice of mankind upon me. When it was compleated I hurried to *London*, and conſidered every moment that paſſed before its publication, as loſt in a kind of neutral exiſtence, and cut off from the golden hours of happineſs and fame. The piece was at laſt printed and diſſeminated by a rapid ſale; I wandered from one place of concourſe to another, feaſted from morning to night on the repetition of my own praiſes, and enjoyed the various conjectures of criticks, the miſtaken candour of my friends, and the impotent malice of my enemies. Some had read the manuſcript and rectified its inaccuracies; others had ſeen it in a ſtate ſo imperfect, that they could not forbear to wonder at its preſent excellence; ſome had converſed with the author at the coffee-houſe; and others gave hints that they had lent him money.

I KNEW that no performance is ſo favourably read as that of a writer who ſuppreſſes his name, and therefore reſolved to remain concealed

concealed till thoſe by whom literary reputation is eſtabliſhed had given their ſuffrages too publickly to retract them. At length my bookſeller informed me that *Aurantius* the ſtanding patron of merit had ſent enquiries after me, and invited me to his acquaintance.

THE time, which I had long expected, was now arrived. I went to *Aurantius* with a beating heart, for I looked upon our interview as the critical moment of my deſtiny. I was received with civilities, which my academick rudeneſs made me unable to repay, but, when I had recovered from my confuſion, I proſecuted the converſation with ſuch livelineſs and propriety, that I confirmed my new friend in his eſteem of my abilities, and was diſmiſſed with the utmoſt ardour of profeſſion, and raptures of fondneſs.

I WAS ſoon ſummoned to dine with *Aurantius*, who had aſſembled the moſt judicious of his friends to partake of the entertainment. Again I exerted my powers of ſentiment and expreſſion, and again found every eye ſparkling with delight, and every tongue

ſilent

ſilent with attention. I now became familiar at the table of *Aurantius*, but could never, in his moſt private or jocund hours, obtain more from him than general declarations of eſteem or endearments of tenderneſs, which included no particular promiſe, and therefore conferred no claim. This frigid reſerve ſomewhat diſguſted me, and when he complained of three days abſence, I took care to inform him with how much importunity of kindneſs I had been detained by his rival *Pollio*.

AURANTIUS now conſidered his honour as endangered by the deſertion of a wit, and leſt I ſhould have an inclination to wander, told me that I could never find a friend more conſtant or zealous than himſelf; that indeed he had made no promiſes, becauſe he hoped to ſurpriſe me with advancement, but had been ſilently promoting my intereſt, and ſhould continue his good offices, unleſs he found the kindneſs of others more deſired.

If you, Mr. *Rambler*, have ever ventured your philoſophy within the attraction of greatneſs, you know the force of ſuch language introduced with a ſmile of gracious tenderneſs, and

and impreſſed at the concluſion with an air of ſolemn ſincerity. From that inſtant I gave myſelf up wholly to *Aurantius*, and, as he immediately reſumed his former gaiety, expected every morning a ſummons to ſome employment of dignity and profit. One month ſucceeded another, and in defiance of appearances I ſtill fanſied myſelf nearer to my wiſhes, and continued to dream of ſucceſs, and wake to diſappointment. At laſt the failure of my little fortune compelled me to abate the finery which I hitherto thought neceſſary to the company with whom I aſſociated, and the rank to which I ſhould be raiſed. *Aurantius* from the moment in which he diſcovered my poverty, conſidered me as fully in his power, and afterwards rather permitted my attendance than invited it, thought himſelf at liberty to refuſe my viſits whenever he had other amuſements within reach, and often ſuffered me to wait without pretending any neceſſary buſineſs. When I was admitted to his table, if any man of rank equal to his own was preſent, he took occaſion to mention my writings and commend my ingenuity, by which he intended to apologize for the confuſion of diſtinctions, and the improper

proper aſſortment of his company; and often called upon me to entertain his friends with my productions, as a ſportſman delights the ſquires of his neighbourhood with the curvets of his horſe, or the obedience of his ſpaniels.

To compleat my mortification, it was his practice to impoſe taſks upon me, by requiring me to write upon ſuch ſubjects as he thought ſuſceptible of ornament and illuſtration. With theſe extorted performances he was little ſatisfied, becauſe he rarely found in them the ideas which his own imagination had ſuggeſted, and which he therefore thought more natural than mine.

When the pale of ceremony is broken, rudeneſs and inſult ſoon enter at the breach. He now found that he might ſafely harraſs me with vexation, that he had fixed the ſhackles of patronage upon me, and that I could neither reſiſt him nor eſcape. At laſt, in the eighth year of my ſervitude, when the clamour of creditors was vehement, and my neceſſity known to be extreme, he offered me a ſmall office, but hinted his expectations that I ſhould

ſhould marry a young woman with whom he had been acquainted.

I WAS not ſo far depreſſed by my calamities as to comply with his propoſal; but knowing that complaints and expoſtulations would but gratify his inſolence, I turned away with that contempt, with which I ſhall never want ſpirit to treat the wretch who can outgo the guilt of a robber without the temptation of his profit, and who lures the credulous and thoughtleſs to maintain the ſhow of his Levee, and the mirth of his table, at the expence of honour, happineſs, and life. I am,

SIR, &c.

LIBERALIS.

NUMB. 164. SATURDAY, *October* 12, 1751.

——Vitium, Gaure, Catonis habes.

MART.

PRAISE and diſtinction are ſo pleaſing to the pride of man, that a great part of the pain and pleaſure of life ariſes from the

gratification or diſappointment of this inceſſant wiſh for ſuperiority, from the ſucceſs or miſcarriage of ſecret competitions, from victories and defeats of which none are conſcious except ourſelves.

PROPORTIONATE to the prevalence of this love of praiſe is the variety of means by which its attainment is attempted. Every man, however hopeleſs his pretenſions may appear to all but himſelf, has ſome project by which he hopes to riſe to reputation; ſome art by which he imagines that the notice of the world will be attracted; ſome quality, good or bad, which diſcriminates him from the common herd of mortals, and by which others may be perſuaded to love, or compelled to fear him. The aſcents of honour, however ſteep, never appear inacceſſible; he that deſpairs to ſcale the precipices by which valour and learning have conducted their favourites, diſcovers ſome by-path, or eaſier acclivity, which, though it cannot conduct him to the ſummit, will yet enable him to overlook thoſe with whom he is now contending for eminence; and we ſeldom require more to the happineſs of the preſent hour, than

than to ſurpaſs him that ſtands next before us.

As the greater part of humankind ſpeak and act wholly by imitation, moſt of thoſe who aſpire to honour and applauſe propoſe to themſelves ſome example which ſerves as the model of their conduct, and the limit of their hopes. Almoſt every man if cloſely examined, will be found to have enliſted himſelf under ſome leader whom he expects to conduct him to renown; to have ſome hero or other, living or dead, perpetually in his view, whoſe character he endeavours to aſſume, and whoſe performances he labours to equal.

When the original is well choſen and judiciouſly copied, the imitator often arrives at excellence, which he could never have attained without direction; for few are formed with abilities to diſcover new poſſibilities of excellence, and to diſtinguiſh themſelves by means never tried before.

But it frequently happens that folly and idleneſs contrive to gratify pride at a cheaper rate;

rate; that not the qualities which are moſt illuſtrious, but thoſe which are of eaſieſt attainment are ſelected to be copied; and that the honours and rewards which public gratitude has paid to the benefactors of mankind, are expected by wretches who can only imitate them in their vices and defects, or adopt ſome petty ſingularities of which thoſe from whom they are borrowed, were ſecretly aſhamed.

No man riſes to ſuch height as to become conſpicuous, but he is on one ſide cenſured by undiſcerning malice, which reproaches him for his beſt actions and ſlanders his apparent and inconteſtable excellencies; and idolized on the other ſide by ignorant admiration, which exalts his faults and follies into virtues. It may be obſerved, that he by whoſe intimacy his acquaintances imagine themſelves dignified, generally diffuſes among them his mien and his habits; and indeed without more vigilance than is generally applied to the regulation of the minuter parts of behaviour, it is not eaſy when we converſe much with one whoſe general character excites our veneration, to eſcape all contagion

gion of his peculiarities, even when we do not deliberately think them worthy of our notice, and when they would have excited laughter or diſguſt had they not been protected by their alliance to nobler qualities, and accidentally conſorted with knowledge or with virtue.

The faults of a man loved or honoured, ſometimes ſteal ſecretly and imperceptibly upon the wiſe and virtuous, but by injudicious fondneſs or thoughtleſs vanity are often adopted with deſign and boaſted as reſemblances of acknowledged merit. There is ſcarce any failing of mind or body, any error of opinion, or depravity of practice, which, inſtead of producing ſhame and diſcontent, its natural effects, has not at one time or other gladdened vanity with the hopes of praiſe, and been diſplayed with oſtentatious induſtry, by thoſe who ſought kindred minds among the wits or heroes, and could prove their relation only by ſimilitude of deformity.

In conſequence of this perverſe ambition, every habit which reaſon condemns may be indulged and avowed. When a man is re-

proached for his faults, he may indeed be pardoned though not commended if he endeavours to run for ſhelter to ſome celebrated name; but it is not to be ſuffered that from the retreats to which he fled from infamy, he ſhould iſſue again with the confidence of conqueſt, and call upon mankind for praiſes and rewards. Yet we ſee men that waſte their patrimony in luxury, deſtroy their health with debauchery, and enervate their minds with idleneſs, becauſe there have been ſome whom luxury never could ſink into contempt, nor idleneſs hinder from the praiſe of genius.

THOSE who have ſo much perplexed their ideas as to claim reputation from vice or folly, merely becauſe they have been ſometimes by uncommon genius or virtue preſerved from contempt, will ſcarcely be reclaimed; but this general inclination of mankind to copy characters in the groſs without diſcrimination, and the force which the recommendation of illuſtrious examples adds to the allurements of vice, ought to be conſidered by all whoſe character excludes them from the ſhades of ſecrecy, as incitements to ſcrupulous caution and univerſal purity of manners.

ners. No man however enſlaved to his appetites, or hurried by his paſſions, can, while he preſerves his intellects unimpaired, pleaſe himſelf with promoting the corruption of others. He whoſe merit has enlarged his influence, would ſurely wiſh to exert it for the benefit of mankind. Yet ſuch will be the effect of his reputation while he ſuffers himſelf to indulge any favourite fault, that they who have no hope to reach his excellence, will catch at his failings, and his virtues will be cited to juſtify the copiers of his vices.

It is particularly the duty of thoſe who conſign illuſtrious names to poſterity, to take care leſt their readers be miſled by ambiguous examples. That writer may be juſtly condemned as an enemy to goodneſs who ſuffers his fondneſs or his intereſt to confound right with wrong, or to ſhelter the faults which even the wiſeſt and the beſt have committed from that ignomony which guilt ought always to ſuffer, and with which it ſhould be more deeply ſtigmatized when dignified by its neighbourhood to uncommon worth, ſince we ſhall be in danger of beholding it without abhorrence, unleſs its turpitude be laid open,

and the eye ſecured from the deception of ſurrounding ſplendor.

NUMB. 165. TUESDAY, *October* 15, 1751.

Ἦν νέος, ἀλλὰ πένης; νῦν γηρῶν, πλήσιός εἰμι.
Ὦ μόνος ἐκ πάντων οἰκτρὸς ἐν ἀμφοτέροις,
Ὃς τότε μὲν χρῆσθαι δυνάμην, ὁπότ' ἤδη ἐν εἶχον.
Νῦν δ' ὁπότε χρῆσθαι μὴ δύναμαι, τότ' ἔχω.

ANTIPHILUS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THE writers who have undertaken the unpromiſing taſk of moderating deſire, exert all the power of their eloquence, to ſhew that happineſs is not the lot of man, and have by many arguments and examples proved the inſtability of every condition by which envy or ambition are excited. They have ſet before our eyes all the calamities to which we are expoſed from the frailty of nature, the influence of accident, or the ſtratagems of malice; they have terrified greatneſs

neſs with conſpiracies, and riches with anxieties, wit with criticiſm, and beauty with diſeaſe.

ALL the force of reaſon and all the charms of language are indeed neceſſary to ſupport poſitions which every man hears with a wiſh to confute them. Truth finds an eaſy entrance into the mind when ſhe is introduced by deſire, and attended by pleaſure; but when ſhe intrudes uncalled and brings only fear and ſorrow in her train, the paſſes of the intellect are barred againſt her by prejudice and paſſion; if ſhe ſometimes forces her way by the batteries of argument, ſhe ſeldom long keeps poſſeſſion of her conqueſt, but is ejected by ſome favoured enemy, or at beſt obtains only a nominal ſovereignty without influence and without authority.

THAT life is ſhort we are all convinced, and yet ſuffer not that conviction to repreſs our projects or limit our expectations; that life is miſerable we all feel, and yet we believe that the time is near when we ſhall feel it no longer. But to hope happineſs and immortality is equally vain. Our ſtate may indeed be more or leſs imbittered, as our duration

may be more or leſs contracted; yet the utmoſt felicity which we can ever attain, will be little better than alleviation of miſery, and we ſhall always feel more pain from our wants than pleaſure from our enjoyments. To deſtroy the effect of all our ſucceſs, it is not neceſſary that any ſignal calamity ſhould fall upon us, that we ſhould be harraſſed by implacable perſecution, or excruciated by irremediable pains; the brighteſt hours of proſperity have their clouds, and the ſtream of life, if it is not ruffled by obſtructions, will grow putrid by ſtagnation.

I WAS deſcended of an ancient family, but my father reſolving not to imitate the folly of his anceſtors, who had hitherto left the younger ſons as encumbrances on the eldeſt, deſtined me to a lucrative profeſſion, and excited my diligence from my earlieſt years by repreſentations of the penury and meanneſs in which I muſt paſs my time, if I did not raiſe myſelf to independence and plenty by honeſt application. I heard him with reverence, and endeavoured to obey him; and being careful to loſe no opportunity of improvement, was at the uſual time in which young men enter the world,

world, well qualified for the exerciſe of the buſineſs which I had choſen.

My eagerneſs to diſtinguiſh myſelf in publick, and my impatience of the narrow ſcheme of life to which my indigence confined me, did not ſuffer me to continue long in the town where I was born, and had always lived, except when the Univerſity exacted my attendance. I went away as from a place of confinement, with a reſolution to return no more, till I ſhould be able to dazzle with my ſplendor thoſe who now looked upon me with contempt, to reward thoſe who had paid honours to my dawning merit, and to ſhow all who had ſuffered me to glide by them unknown and neglected, how much they miſtook their intereſt in omitting to propitiate a genius like mine.

Such were my intentions when I ſallied forth into the unknown world in queſt of riches and honours, which, with the confidence of unexperienced vivacity, I expected to procure in a very ſhort time; for what could withold them from induſtry and knowledge? He that indulges hope will always be diſappointed. Reputation indeed I very ſoon ob-

tained, but as merit is much more cheaply acknowledged than rewarded, I did not find myſelf yet enriched in proportion to my celebrity. I was therefore ſoon awakened from my dream of ſudden affluence, but however was ſufficiently encouraged to perſeverance by the gradual encreaſe of profit, and the proſpect which every ſtep of progreſſive fortune opens to new advantages.

I HAD in time ſurmounted the obſtacles by which envy and competition obſtruct the firſt attempts of a new claimant, and ſaw my opponents and cenſurers tacitly confeſſing their deſpair of ſucceſs, by courting my friendſhip and yielding to my influence. They who once perſued me, were now ſatisfied to eſcape from me; and they who had before thought me preſumptuous in hoping to overtake them, had now their utmoſt wiſh, if they were permitted at no great diſtance quietly to follow me.

I DID not ſuffer my ſucceſs to elate me to inſolence, nor made uſe of my ſuperiority to return the injuries which I had ſuffered only for endeavouring to gain it. I conſidered not myſelf as exempted from the neceſſity of caution; but remembered that, as no man can truly

truly think his voyage ended while he is yet floating upon the water, however nearly he may approach the port, ſo he that is yet at the mercy of the publick can never ſafely relax his vigilance.

My wants were not madly multiplied as my acquiſitions encreaſed, and the time came at length when I thought myſelf enabled to gratify all reaſonable deſires, and when, therefore, I reſolved no longer to truſt my quiet to chance, but to enjoy that plenty and ſerenity which I had been hitherto labouring to procure, to enjoy them while I was yet neither cruſhed by age into infirmity, nor ſo habituated to a particular manner of life as to be unqualified for new ſtudies or entertainments.

I now quitted my profeſſion, and to ſet myſelf at once free from all importunities to reſume it, changed my reſidence, and devoted the remaining part of my time to quiet and amuſement. Amidſt innumerable projects of pleaſure which reſtleſs idleneſs incited me to form, and of which moſt, when they came to the moment of execution, were rejected for

others of no longer continuance, ſome accident revived in my imagination the pleaſing ideas of my native place. It was now in my power to viſit thoſe from whom I had been ſo long abſent, in ſuch a manner as was conſiſtent with my former reſolution, and I wondered how it could happen that I had ſo long delayed my own happineſs.

Full of the admiration which I ſhould excite, and the homage which I ſhould receive, I dreſſed my ſervants in a more oſtentatious Livery, purchaſed a magnificent chariot, and reſolved to dazzle the inhabitants of the little town with an unexpected blaze of greatneſs.

While the preparations that vanity required were made for my departure, which, as workmen will not eaſily be hurried beyond their ordinary rate, I thought very tedious, I ſolaced my impatience with imaging the various cenſures that my appearance would produce, the hopes which ſome would feel from my bounty, the terror which my power would ſtrike on others; the aukward reſpect with which I ſhould be accoſted by timorous officiouſneſs; and the diſtant reverence with which

which others leſs familiar to ſplendor and dignity would be contented to gaze upon me, I deliberated a long time, whether I ſhould immediately deſcend to a level with my former acquaintances, or make my condeſcenſion more grateful by a gentle tranſition from haughtineſs and reſerve. At length I determined to forget ſome of my companions, till they diſcovered themſelves by ſome indubitable token, and to receive the congratulations of others upon my good fortune with indifference, to ſhow that I always expected what I had now obtained. The acclamations of the populace I purpoſed to reward with ſix hogſheads of ale, and a roaſted ox, and then recommend to them to return to their work.

At laſt all the trappings of grandeur were fitted, and I began the journey of triumph, which I could have wiſhed to have ended in the ſame moment, but my horſes felt none of their maſter's ardour, and I was ſhaken four days upon rugged roads. I then entered the town, and having graciouſly let fall the glaſſes that my perſon might be ſeen, paſſed ſlowly thro' the ſtreet. The noiſe of the wheels brought the inhabitants to their doors, but I could

could not perceive that I was known by them. At laſt I alighted, and my name I ſuppoſe was told by my ſervants, for the barber ſtept from the oppoſite houſe, and ſeized me by the hand with honeſt joy in his countenance, which according to the rule that I had preſcribed to myſelf I repreſſed with a frigid graciouſneſs. The fellow inſtead of ſinking into dejection turned away with contempt, and left me to conſider how the ſecond ſalutation ſhould be received. The next friend was better treated, for I ſoon found that I muſt purchaſe by civility that regard which I had expected to enforce by inſolence.

THERE was yet no ſmoak of bonfires, no harmony of bells, no ſhout of crouds, nor riot of joy; the buſineſs of the day went forward as before, and after having ordered a ſplendid ſupper which no man came to partake, and which my chagrin hindered me from taſting, I went to bed, where the vexation of diſappointment overpowered the fatigue of my journey, and kept me from ſleep.

I ROSE ſo much humbled by thoſe mortifications, as to enquire after the preſent ſtate of the

the town, and found that I had been abſent too long to obtain the triumph which had flattered my expectation. Of the friends whoſe compliments I expected ſome had long ago moved to diſtant provinces, ſome had loſt in the maladies of age all ſenſe of another's proſperity, and ſome had forgotten our former intimacy amidſt care and diſtreſſes. Of three whom I had reſolved to puniſh for their former Offences by a longer continuance of neglect, one was, by his own induſtry, raiſed above my ſcorn, and two were ſheltered from it in the grave. All thoſe whom I loved, feared, or hated, all whoſe envy or whoſe kindneſs I had hopes of contemplating with pleaſure, were ſwept away, and their place was filled by a new generation with other views and other competitions: and among many proofs of the impotence of wealth, I found that it conferred upon me very few diſtinctions in my native place.

I am,

SIR, &c.

SEROTINUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 166. SATURDAY, *October* 19, 1751.

Pauper eris ſemper, ſi pauper es Æmiliane,
Dantur opes nullis nunc niſi divitibus.
MART.

NO complaint has been more frequently repeated in all ages than that of the neglect of merit aſſociated with poverty, and the difficulty with which valuable or pleaſing qualities force themſelves into view, when they are obſcured by indigence. It has been long obſerved that native beauty has little power to charm without the ornaments which fortune beſtows, and that to want the favour of others is often ſufficient to hinder us from obtaining it.

EVERY day diſcovers that mankind are not yet convinced of their error, or that their conviction is without power to influence their conduct; for poverty ſtill continues to produce contempt, and ſtill obſtructs the claims of kindred and of virtue. The eye of wealth is elevated towards higher ſtations, and ſeldom deſcends to examine the actions of thoſe who

who are placed below the level of its notice, and who in diſtant regions and lower ſituations are ſtruggling with diſtreſs, or toiling for bread. Among the multitudes overwhelmed with inſuperable calamity, it is common to find thoſe whom a very little aſſiſtance would enable to ſupport themſelves with decency, and who yet cannot obtain from near relations what they ſee hourly laviſhed in oſtentation, luxury, or frolick.

It is certain that poverty does not eaſily conciliate affection. He that has been confined from his infancy to the converſation of the loweſt claſſes of mankind, muſt neceſſarily want thoſe accompliſhments which are the uſual means of attracting kindneſs; and though truth, fortitude, and probity give an indiſputable right to reverence and kindneſs, they will not be diſtinguiſhed by common eyes unleſs they are brightened by elegance of manners, but are caſt aſide like unpoliſhed gems, of which none but the artiſt knows the intrinſick value, till their aſperities are ſmoothed and their incruſtations rubbed away.

THE groſſneſs of vulgar habits obſtructs the efficacy of virtue, as impurity and harſhneſs of ſtile impairs the force of reaſon, and rugged numbers turn off the mind from artifice of diſpoſition, and vigour of invention. Few have ſtrength of reaſon ſufficient to over-rule the perceptions of ſenſe; and yet fewer have ſo much curioſity or benevolence as to ſtruggle long againſt the firſt impreſſion; he therefore who fails to pleaſe in his ſalutation and addreſs is commonly rejected without farther trial, and never obtains an opportunity of ſhowing his latent excellencies, or eſſential qualities.

IT is indeed not eaſy to preſcribe a ſucceſsful manner of approach to the diſtreſſed or neceſſitous, whoſe condition ſubjects every kind of behaviour equally to miſcarriage. He whoſe confidence of merit incites him to meet without any apparent ſenſe of inferiority the eyes of thoſe who flattered themſelves with their own dignity, is conſidered as an inſolent leveller, impatient of the juſt prerogatives of rank and wealth, eager to uſurp the ſtation to which he has no right,

and

and to confound the ſubordinations of ſociety; and who would contribute to the exaltation of that ſpirit, which even want and calamity are not able to reſtrain from rudeneſs and rebellion?

But no better ſucceſs will commonly be found to attend ſervility and dejection, which often give pride the confidence to treat them with contempt. A requeſt made with diffidence and timidity is eaſily denied, becauſe the petitioner himſelf ſeems to doubt its fitneſs.

Kindness is generally reciprocal; we are deſirous of pleaſing others becauſe we receive pleaſure from them; but by what means can the man pleaſe, whoſe attention is engroſſed by his diſtreſſes, and who has no leiſure to be officious; whoſe will is reſtrained by his neceſſities, and who has no power to confer benefits; whoſe temper is perhaps vitiated by miſery, and whoſe underſtanding is impeded by ignorance?

It is yet a more offenſive diſcouragement, that the ſame actions performed by different hands

hands produce different effects, and inſtead of rating the man by his performances, we rate too frequently the performance by the man. It ſometimes happens in the combinations of life, that important ſervices are performed by inferiors; but though their zeal and activity may be paid by pecuniary rewards, they ſeldom excite that flow of gratitude, or obtain that accumulation of recompence with which all think it their duty to acknowledge the favour of thoſe who deſcend to their aſſiſtance from a higher elevation. To be obliged, is to be in ſome reſpect inferior to another; and few willingly indulge the memory of an action which raiſes one whom they have always been accuſtomed to think below them, but ſatisfy themſelves with faint praiſe and penurious payment, and then drive it from their own minds and endeavour to conceal it from the knowledge of others.

It may be always objected to the ſervices of thoſe who can be ſuppoſed to want a reward, that they were produced not by kindneſs but intereſt; they are therefore, when they are no longer wanted, eaſily diſregarded

as

as arts of inſinuation, or ſtratagems of ſelfiſhneſs, which it is juſt and prudent to diſcountenance. Benefits which are received as gifts from wealth, are exacted as debts from indigence; and he that in a high ſtation is celebrated for his generoſity, would in a meaner condition have barely been confeſſed to have done his duty.

It is ſcarcely poſſible for the utmoſt benevolence to oblige, when exerted under the diſadvantages of great inferiority, for by the habitual arrogance of wealth, ſuch expectations are commonly formed as no zeal or induſtry can ſatisfy; and what regard can he hope, who has done leſs than was demanded from him?

There are indeed kindneſſes conferred which were never purchaſed by precedent favours, and there is an affection not ariſing from gratitude or intereſt, by which ſimilar natures are attracted to each other, without proſpect of any other advantage than the pleaſure of exchanging ſentiments, and the hope of confirming their eſteem of themſelves by the approbation of each other.

But

But this ſpontaneous fondneſs ſeldom riſes at the ſight of poverty, which every one regards with habitual contempt, and of which the applauſe is no more courted by vanity, than the countenance is ſolicited by ambition. The moſt generous and diſintereſted friendſhip muſt be reſolved at laſt into the love of ourſelves; he therefore whoſe reputation or dignity inclines us to conſider his eſteem as a teſtimonial of deſert, will always find our hearts open to his endearments. We every day ſee men of eminence followed with all the obſequiouſneſs of dependance, and courted with all the blandiſhments of flattery, by thoſe who want nothing from them but profeſſions of regard, and who think themſelves liberally rewarded by a bow, a ſmile, or an embrace.

But thoſe prejudices which every mind feels more or leſs in favour of riches, ought like other opinions which only cuſtom and example have impreſſed upon us, to be in time ſubjected to reaſon. We muſt learn how to ſeparate the real character from extraneous adheſions and caſual circumſtances, to conſider cloſely him whom we are about to adopt

adopt or to reject; to regard his inclinations as well as his actions; to trace out thoſe virtues which lie torpid in the heart for want of opportunity, and thoſe vices that lurk unſeen by the abſence of temptation; that when we find worth faintly ſhooting in the ſhades of obſcurity, we may let in light and ſunſhine upon it, and ripen barren volition into efficacy and power.

NUMB. 167. TUESDAY, *October* 22, 1751.

Candida perpetuo reſide concordia lecto,
Tamque pari ſemper ſit Venus æqua jugo.
Diligat ipſa ſenem quondam, ſed et ipſa marito
Tum quoque cum fuerit, non videatur anus.

MART.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

IT is not common to envy thoſe with whom we cannot eaſily be placed in compariſon. Every man ſees without malevolence the progreſs of another in the tracks of life,

life, which he has himſelf no deſire to tread, and hears without inclination to cavils or contradiction the renown of thoſe whoſe diſtance will not ſuffer them to draw the attention of mankind from his own merit. The ſailor never thinks it neceſſary to conteſt the lawyer's abilities; nor would the *Rambler*, however jealous of his reputation, be much diſturbed by the ſucceſs of rival wits at *Agra* or *Iſpahan*.

We do not therefore aſcribe to you any ſuperlative degree of virtue, when we believe that we may inform you of our change of condition without danger of malignant faſcination; and that when you read of the marriage of your correſpondents *Hymenæus* and *Tranquilla*, you will join your wiſhes to thoſe of their other friends for the happy event of an union in which caprice and ſelfiſhneſs had ſo little part.

There is at leaſt this reaſon why we ſhould be leſs deceived in our connubial hopes than many who enter into the ſame ſtate, that we have allowed ourſelves to form no unreaſonable expectations, nor vitiated our fancies

fancies in the ſoft hours of courtſhip, with viſions of felicity which human power cannot beſtow, or of perfection which human virtue cannot attain. That impartiality with which we endeavoured to inſpect the manners of all whom we have known was never ſo much overpowered by our paſſion, but that we diſcovered ſome faults and weakneſſes in each other; and joined our hands in conviction, that as there are advantages to be enjoyed in marriage, there are inconveniencies likewiſe to be endured; and that together with confederate intellects and auxiliar virtues, we muſt find different opinions and oppoſite inclinations.

We however flatter ourſelves, for who is not flattered by himſelf as well as by others on the day of marriage, that we are eminently qualified to give mutual pleaſure. Our birth is without any ſuch remarkable diſparity as can give either an opportunity of inſulting the other with pompous names and ſplendid alliances, or of calling in upon any domeſtick controverſy the overbearing aſſiſtance of powerful relations. Our fortune was equally ſuitable, ſo that we meet with-

out any of those obligations which always produce reproach or suspicion of reproach, which, though they may be forgotten in the gaieties of the first month, no delicacy will always suppress, or of which the suppression must be considered as a new favour, to be repaid by tameness and submission, till gratitude takes the place of love, and the desire of pleasing degenerates by degrees into the fear of offending.

The settlements caused no delay; for we did not trust our affairs to the negotiation of wretches who would have paid their court by multiplying stipulations. *Tranquilla* scorned to detain any part of her fortune from him into whose hands she delivered up her person; and *Hymenæus* thought no act of baseness more criminal than his who enslaves his wife by her own generosity, who by marrying without a jointure condemns her to all the dangers of accident and caprice, and at last boasts his liberality by granting what only the indiscretion of her kindness enabled him to withhold. He therefore received on the common terms the portion which any other woman might have brought him, and reserved

all

all the exuberance of acknowledgment for thoſe excellencies which he has yet been able to diſcover only in *Tranquilla*.

We did not paſs the weeks of courtſhip like thoſe who conſider themſelves as taking the laſt draught of pleaſure, and reſolve not to quit the bowl without a ſurfeit, or who know themſelves about to ſet happineſs to hazard, and endeavour to loſe their ſenſe of danger in the ebriety of perpetual amuſement, and whirl round the gulph before they ſink. *Hymenæus* often repeated a medical axiom, that *the ſuccours of ſickneſs ought not to be waſted in health*. We know that however our eyes may yet ſparkle, and our hearts bound at the preſence of each other, the time of liſtleſſneſs and ſatiety, of peviſhneſs and diſcontent muſt come at laſt, in which we ſhall be driven for relief to ſhews and recreations; that the uniformity of life muſt be ſometimes diverſified, and the vacuities of converſation ſometimes ſupplied. We rejoice in the reflection that we have ſtores of novelty yet unexhauſted, which may be opened when repletion ſhall call for change, and gratifications yet untaſted, by which life

when it ſhall become vapid or bitter may be reſtored to its former ſweetneſs and ſprightlineſs, and again irritate the appetite, and again ſparkle in the cup.

Our time will probably be leſs taſteleſs than that of thoſe whom the authority and avarice of parents unites almoſt without their conſent in their early years, before they have accumulated any fund of reflection, or collected materials for mutual entertainment. Such we have often ſeen riſing in the morning to cards, and retiring in the afternoon to doſe, whoſe happineſs was celebrated by their neighbours, becauſe they happened to grow rich by parſimony, and to be kept quiet by inſenſibility, and agreed to eat and to ſleep together.

We have both mingled with the world, and are therefore no ſtrangers to the faults and virtues, the deſigns and competitions, the hopes and fears of our contemporaries. We have both amuſed our leiſure with books, and can therefore recount the events of former times, or cite the dictates of antient wiſdom.

dom. Every occurrence furniſhes us with ſome hint which one or the other can improve, and if it ſhould happen that memory or imagination fail us, we can retire to no idle or unimproving ſolitude.

THO' our characters beheld at a diſtance, exhibit this general reſemblance, yet a nearer inſpection diſcovers ſuch a diſſimilitude of our habitudes and ſentiments, as leaves each ſome peculiar advantages, and affords that *concordia diſcors*, that ſuitable diſagreement which is always neceſſary to intellectual harmony. There may be a total diverſity of ideas which admits no participation of the ſame delight, and there may likewiſe be ſuch a conformity of notions, as leaves neither any thing to add to the deciſions of the other. With ſuch contrariety there can be no peace, with ſuch ſimilarity there can be no pleaſure. Our reaſonings, though often formed upon different views, terminate generally in the ſame concluſion. Our thoughts like rivulets iſſuing from diſtant ſprings, are each impregnated in its courſe with various mixtures, and tinged by infuſions unknown to the other, yet at laſt eaſily unite into one ſtream,

and purify themſelves by the gentle effervescence of contrary qualities.

THESE benefits we receive in a greater degree as we converſe without reſerve, becauſe we have nothing to conceal. We have no debts to be paid by imperceptible deductions from avowed expences, no habits to be indulged by the private ſubſerviency of a favoured ſervant, no private interviews with needy relations, no intelligence with ſpies placed upon each other. We conſidered marriage as the moſt ſolemn league of perpetual friendſhip, a ſtate from which artifice and concealment are to be baniſhed for ever, and in which every act of diſſimulation is a breach of faith.

The impetuous vivacity of youth, and that ardor of deſire, which the firſt ſight of pleaſure naturally produces, have long ceaſed to hurry us into irregularity and vehemence; and experience has ſhewn us that few gratifications are too valuable to be ſacrificed to complaiſance. We have thought it convenient to reſt from the fatigue of pleaſure, and now only continue that courſe of life into which

which we had before entered, confirmed in our choice by mutual approbation, ſupported in our reſolution by mutual encouragement, and aſſiſted in our efforts by mutual exhortation.

SUCH, Mr. *Rambler*, is our proſpect of life, a proſpect which as it is beheld with more attention, ſeems to open more extenſive happineſs, and ſpreads by degrees into the boundleſs regions of eternity. But if all our prudence has been vain, and we are doomed to give one inſtance more of the uncertainty of human diſcernment, we ſhall comfort ourſelves amidſt our diſappointments, that we were not betrayed but by ſuch deluſions as caution could not eſcape, ſince we ſought happineſs only in the arms of virtue. We are,

SIR,

Your humble Servants,

HYMENÆUS,
TRANQULLA.

NUMB. 168. SATURDAY, *October* 26, 1751.

——— *Decipit*
Frons prima multos, rara mens intelligit
Quod interiore condidit cura angulo.

PHÆDRUS.

IT has been obſerved by *Boileau*, that "a "mean or common thought expreſſed in "pompous diction, generally pleaſes more "than a new or noble ſentiment delivered in "low and vulgar language; becauſe the "number is greater of thoſe whom cuſtom "has enabled to judge of words, than whom "ſtudy has qualified to examine Things."

THIS ſolution might ſatisfy, if ſuch only were offended with meanneſs of expreſſion as are unable to diſtinguiſh propriety of thought, and to ſeparate propoſitions or images from the vehicles by which they are conveyed to the underſtanding. But this kind of diſguſt is by no means confined to the ignorant or ſuperficial; it operates uniformly and univerſally upon readers of all claſſes; every man, however

ever profound or abſtracted, perceives himſelf irreſiſtibly alienated by low terms, and they who profeſs the moſt zealous adherence to truth are forced to admit that ſhe owes part of her charms to her ornaments, and loſes much of her power over the ſoul, when ſhe appears diſgraced by a dreſs uncouth or ill-adjuſted.

We are all offended by low terms, but are not pleaſed or diſguſted alike by the ſame compoſitions, becauſe we do not all agree to cenſure the ſame terms as low. No word is naturally or intrinſically meaner than another; our notions therefore of words, as of other things arbitrarily and capriciouſly eſtabliſhed, depend wholly upon accident and cuſtom. The cottager thinks thoſe apartments ſplendid and ſpacious, which an inhabitant of palaces will deſpiſe for their inelegance; and to him who has paſſed moſt of his hours with the delicate and polite, many expreſſions will ſeem deſpicable and ſordid, which another, equally acute and judicious may hear without offence; but a mean term never fails to diſpleaſe him to whom it appears mean, as poverty is certainly and invariably deſpiſed, though he who

is poor in the opinion of ſome, may by others be envied for his wealth.

WORDS become low by the occaſions to which they are applied, or the general character of them who uſe them; and the diſguſt which they produce, ariſes from the revival of thoſe images with which they are commonly united. Thus if, in the moſt ſolemn diſcourſe, a phraſe happens to occur which has been ſucceſsfully employed in ſome ludicrous narrative, the graveſt auditor finds it difficult to refrain from laughter, when they who are not prepoſſeſſed by the ſame accidental aſſociation are utterly unable to gueſs the reaſon of his merriment. Words which convey ideas of dignity in one age, are baniſhed from elegant writing or converſation in another, becauſe they are in time debaſed by vulgar mouths, and can be no longer heard without the involuntary recollection of unpleaſing images.

WHEN *Macbeth* is confirming himſelf in his horrid purpoſe, he breaks out amidſt the violence of his emotions into a wiſh natural to a murderer,

—— Come,

——————Come, thick night!
And pall thee in the dunneſt ſmoke of hell,
That my keen knife ſee not the wound it makes;
Nor heav'n peep through the blanket of the dark,
To cry, hold, hold!——————

In this paſſage is exerted all the force of poetry, that force which calls new powers into being, which embodies ſentiment, and animates matter; yet prehaps ſcarce any man now peruſes it without ſome diſturbance of his attention from the counteraction of the words to the ideas. What can be more dreadful than to implore the preſence of night, inveſted not in common obſcurity, but in the ſmoke of hell? Yet the efficacy of this invocation is deſtroyed by the inſertion of an epithet now ſeldom heard but in the ſtable, and *dun* night may come or go without any other notice than contempt.

If we ſtart into raptures when ſome hero of the Iliad tells us that δόρυ μάινται, his lance rages with eagerneſs to deſtroy; if we are

alarmed at the terror of the ſoldiers commanded by *Cæſar* to hew down the ſacred grove, who dreaded, ſays *Lucan*, leſt the axe aimed at the oak ſhould fly back upon the ſtriker.

——— *Si robora ſacra ferirent,*
In ſua credebant redituras membra ſecures,

we cannot ſurely but ſympathiſe with the horrors of a wretch about to murder his maſter, his friend, his benefactor, who ſuſpects that the weapon will refuſe its office, and ſtart back from the breaſt which he is preparing to violate. Yet this ſentiment is weakened by the name of an inſtrument uſed by butchers and cooks in the meaneſt employments; we do not immediately conceive that any crime of importance is to be committed with a *knife*, and at laſt from the long habit of connecting a kniſe with ſordid offices, feel averſion rather than terror.

MACKBETH proceeds to wiſh, in the madneſs of guilt, that the inſpection of heaven may be intercepted, and that he may in the involutions of infernal darkneſs eſcape the eye of providence. This is the utmoſt

extravagance of determined wickedneſs; yet this is ſo debaſed by two unfortunate words, that while I endeavour to impreſs on my reader the energy of the ſentiment, I can ſcarce check my riſibility, when the expreſſion forces itſelf upon my mind; for who without ſome relaxation of his gravity can hear of the avengers of guilt *peeping through a Blanket?*

THESE imperfections of diction are leſs obvious to the reader, as he is leſs acquainted with the common uſages of the age; they are therefore wholly imperceptible to a foreigner, who learns our language only from books, nor will ſtrike a ſolitary academick ſo forcibly as a modiſh lady.

AMONG the numerous requiſites that muſt concur to compleat an author, few are of more importance than an early entrance into the living world. The ſeeds of knowledge may be planted in ſolitude, but muſt be cultivated in publick. Argumentation may be taught in colleges, and theories formed in retirement, but the artifice of embelliſhment, and the powers of attraction can be gained only by general converſe.

AN

An acquaintance with prevailing cuſtoms and faſhionable elegance is neceſſary likewiſe for other purpoſes. The injury that noble ſentiments ſuffer from unſuitable language, perſonal merit may juſtly fear from rudeneſs and indelicacy. When the ſucceſs of *Æneas* depended on the favour of the queen upon whoſe coaſts he was driven, his celeſtial protectreſs thought him not ſufficiently ſecured againſt rejection by his piety or bravery, but decorated him for the interview with preternatural beauty. Whoever deſires, what none can reaſonably contemn, the favour of mankind, muſt endeavour to add grace to ſtrength, to make his converſation agreeable as well as uſeful, and to accompliſh himſelf with the petty qualifications neceſſary to make the firſt impreſſions in his favour. Many complain of neglect who never uſed any efforts to attract regard. It cannot be expected that the patrons of ſcience or virtue ſhould be ſolicitous to diſcover excellencies which they who poſſeſs them never diſplay. Few have abilities ſo much needed by the reſt of the world as to be careſſed on their own terms; and he that will not condeſcend to recommend himſelf by ex-

ternal embelliſhments, muſt ſubmit to the fate of juſt ſentiments meanly expreſſed, and be ridiculed and forgotten before he is underſtood.

NUMB. 169. TUESDAY, *October* 29, 1751.

Nec pluteum cædit, nec demorſos ſapit ungues.

PERSIUS.

NATURAL hiſtorians aſſert, that whatever is formed for long duration arrives ſlowly to its maturity. Thus the firmeſt timber is of tardy growth, and animals generally exceed each other in longevity in proportion to the time between their conception and their birth.

THE ſame obſervation may be extended to the offſpring of the mind. Haſty compoſitions, however they pleaſe at firſt by flowery luxuriance, and ſpread in the ſun-ſhine of temporary favour, can ſeldom endure the change of ſeaſons, but periſh at the firſt blaſt of criticiſm, or froſt of neglect. When *A-*

pelles

pelles was reproached with the paucity of his productions, and the inceſſant attention with which he retouched his pieces, he condeſcended to make no other anſwer than that *he painted for perpetuity.*

No vanity can more juſtly incur contempt and indignation than that which boaſts of negligence and hurry. For who can bear with patience the writer who claims ſuch ſuperiority to the reſt of his ſpecies, as to imagine that mankind are at leiſure for attention to his extemporary ſallies, and that poſterity will repoſite his caſual effuſions among the treaſures of antient wiſdom?

MEN have ſometimes appeared of ſuch tranſcendent abilities, that their ſlighteſt and moſt curſory performances excel all that labour and ſtudy can enable meaner intellects to compoſe, as there are ſome regions of which the ſpontaneous products cannot be equalled in other ſoils by care and culture. But it is no leſs dangerous for any man to place himſelf in this rank of underſtanding, and fancy that he is born to be illuſtrious without labour, than to omit the cares of huſbandry,

and

and expect from his grounds the fruits of *Arabia*.

THE greater part of thoſe who congratulate themſelves upon their intellectual dignity, and uſurp the privileges of genius, are men whom only themſelves would ever have marked out as enriched by uncommon liberalities of nature, or entitled to veneration and immortality on eaſier terms than others. This ardor of confidence is uſually found among men, who have not enlarged their notions by books or converſation; but are perſuaded by the partiality which we all feel in our own favour, that they have reached the ſummit of excellence, becauſe they diſcover none higher than themſelves; they acquieſce in the firſt thoughts that occur, becauſe the ſcantineſs of their knowledge allows them no choice, and the narrowneſs of their views affords them no glimpſe of that ſublime idea which human induſtry has from the firſt ages been vainly toiling to approach. They ſee a little, aud believe that there is nothing beyond their ſphere of viſion, as the *Patuecos* of *Spain*, who inhabited a ſmall valley, conceived the ſurrounding mountains to be the boundaries of the world. In proportion as perfection is more

more diſtinctly conceived, the pleaſure of contemplating our own performances will be leſſened; it may therefore be obſerved, that they who moſt deſerve praiſe, are often afraid to decide in favour of their own performances; they know how much is ſtill wanting to their completion, and wait with anxiety and terror the determination of the publick. *I pleaſe every one elſe*, ſays *Tully*, *but never ſatisfy myſelf.*

It has often been enquired, why, notwithſtanding the advances of latter ages in ſcience, and the aſſiſtance which the infuſion of ſo many new ideas has given us, we ſtill fall below the antients in the art of compoſition. Some part of their ſuperiority may be juſtly aſcribed to the graces of their language, from which the moſt poliſhed of the preſent *European* tongues, are nothing more than barbarous degenerations. Some advantage they might gain merely by priority, which put them in poſſeſſion of the moſt natural ſentiments, and left us nothing but ſervile repetition or forced conceits. But the greater part of their praiſe ſeems to have the juſt reward of modeſty and labour. Their ſenſe of

human

human weakneſs confined them commonly to one ſtudy, which their knowledge of the extent of every ſcience engaged them to proſecute with indefatigable diligence.

AMONG the writers of antiquity I remember none except *Statius*, who ventures to mention the ſpeedy production of his writings, either as an extenuation of his faults or a proof of his facility. Nor did *Statius*, when he conſidered himſelf as a candidate for laſting reputation, think a cloſer attention unneceſſary, but amidſt all his pride and indigence, the two great haſteners of modern poems, employed twelve years upon the *Thebaid*, and thinks his claim to renown proportionate to his labour.

Thebais, multa cruciata lima,
Tentat, audaci ſide, Mantuanæ
Gaudia famæ.

OVID indeed apologizes in his baniſhment for the imperfection of his letters, but mentions his want of leiſure, to poliſh them as an addition to his calamities, and was ſo far from imagining reviſals and corrections unneceſ-

unneceſſary, that at his departure from *Rome*, he threw his metamorphoſes into the fire, leſt he ſhould be diſgraced by a book which he could not hope to finiſh.

IT ſeems not often to have happened, that the ſame writer aſpired to reputation in verſe and proſe, and of thoſe few that attempted ſuch diverſity of excellence, I know not that any one ſucceeded. Contrary characters they never imagined a ſingle mind able to ſupport, and therefore, no man is recorded to have undertaken more than one kind of dramatick poetry.

WHAT they had written, they did not venture in their firſt fondneſs to thruſt into the world; but conſidering the impropriety of doing precipitately that which cannot be recalled, deferred the publication, if not nine years, according to the direction of *Horace*, yet till their fancy was cooled after the raptures of invention, and the glare of novelty had ceaſed to dazzle the judgment.

THERE were in thoſe days no weekly or diurnal writers, *multa dies, & multa litura*, much

much time, and many raſures, were conſidered as indiſpenſible requiſites; and that no other method of attaining laſting praiſe has been yet diſcovered, may be conjectured from the blotted manuſcripts of *Milton* now remaining, and the tardy emiſſion of *Pope*'s compoſitions, delayed more than once till the incidents to which they alluded were forgotten, till his enemies were ſecure from his ſatire, and what to an honeſt mind muſt be more painful, his friends were deaf to his encomiums.

To him, whoſe eagerneſs of praiſe hurries his productions ſoon into the light, many imperfections are unavoidable even where the mind furniſhes the materials, as well as regulates their diſpoſition, and nothing depends upon ſearch or information. Delay opens new veins of thought, the ſubject diſmiſſed for a time appears with a new train of dependant images, the accidents of reading or converſation ſupply new ornaments or alluſions; or mere intermiſſion of the fatigue of thinking enables the mind to collect new force, and make new excurſions. But all thoſe benefits come too late for him, who when he

was

was weary with labour, ſnatched at the recompence, and gave his performance to his friends and his enemies as ſoon as impatience and pride perſuaded him to conclude it.

ONE of the moſt pernicious effects of haſte, is obſcurity. He that teems with a quick ſucceſſion of ideas, and perceives how one ſentiment produces another, eaſily believes that he can clearly expreſs what he ſo ſtrongly comprehends; he ſeldom ſuſpects his thoughts of embarraſment while he preſerves in his own memory the ſeries of connection, or his diction of ambiguity while only one ſenſe is preſent to his mind. Yet if he has been employed on an abſtruſe or complicated argument, he will find, when he has a while withdrawn his mind, and returns as a new reader to his work, that he has only a conjectural glimpſe of his own meaning, and that to explain it to thoſe whom he deſires to inſtruct, he muſt open his ſentiments, diſentangle his method, and alter his arrangement.

AUTHORS and lovers always ſuffer ſome infatuation, from which only abſence can ſet them free; and every man ought to reſtore himſelf

himſelf to the full exerciſe of his judgment, before he does that which he cannot do improperly without injuring his honour and his quiet.

NUMB. 170. SATURDAY, *November* 2, 1751.

Confiteor; ſi quid proteſt delicta fateri.

OVID.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I AM one of thoſe beings, from whom many, that melt at the ſight of all other miſery, think it meritorious to withhold relief; one whom the rigour of virtuous indignation dooms to ſuffer without complaint, and periſh without regard; and whom I myſelf have formerly inſulted in the pride of reputation and ſecurity of innocence.

I AM of a good family, but my father was burthened with more children than he could decently ſupport. A wealthy relation, as he travelled

travelled from *London* to his country ſeat, condeſcending to make him a viſit, was touched with compaſſion of his narrow fortune, and reſolved to eaſe him of part of his charge by taking the care of a child upon himſelf. Diſtreſs on one ſide and ambition on the other, were too powerful for parental fondneſs, and the little family paſſed in review before him that he might make his choice. I was then ten years old, and without knowing for what purpoſe I was called to my great couſin, endeavoured to recommend myſelf by my beſt courteſy, ſung him my prettieſt ſong, told the laſt ſtory that I had read, and ſo much endeared myſelf by my innocence, that he declared his reſolution to adopt me, and to educate me with his own daughters.

My parents felt the common ſtruggles at the thought of parting, and *ſome natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them ſoon.* They conſidered, not without that falſe eſtimation of the value of wealth which poverty long continued always produces, that I was raiſed to higher rank than they could give me, and to hopes of more ample fortune than they could bequeath. My mother ſold ſome of her ornaments

naments to dreſs me in ſuch a manner as might ſecure me from contempt at my firſt arrival; and when ſhe diſmiſſed me, preſſed me to her boſom with an embrace which I ſtill feel, gave me ſome precepts of piety which however neglected I have not forgotten, and uttered prayers for my final happineſs, of which I have not yet ceaſed to hope, that they will at laſt be granted.

My ſiſters envied my new finery, and ſeemed not much to regret our ſeparation; my father conducted me to the ſtage-coach with a kind of chearful tenderneſs; and in a very ſhort time, I was tranſported to ſplendid apartments, and a luxurious table, and grew familiar to ſhow, noiſe, and gaiety.

In three years my mother died, having implored a bleſſing on her family with her laſt breath. I had little opportunity to indulge a ſorrow which there was none to partake with me, and therefore ſoon ceaſed to reflect much upon my loſs. My father turned all his care upon his other children, whom ſome fortunate adventures and unexpected legacies enabled him, when he died four years after

after my mother, to leave in a condition above their expectations.

I SHOULD have ſhared the encreaſe of his fortune, and had once a portion aſſigned me in his will; but my couſin aſſuring him that all care for me was needleſs, ſince he had reſolved to place me happily in the world, directed him to divide my part amongſt my ſiſters.

THUS I was thrown upon dependance without reſource. Being now at an age in which young women are initiated in company, I was no longer to be ſupported in my former character but at conſiderable expence; ſo that partly leſt I ſhould waſte money, and partly leſt my appearance might draw too many compliments and aſſiduities, I was inſenſibly degraded from my equality, and enjoyed few privileges above the head ſervant, but that of receiving no wages.

I FELT every indignity, but knew that reſentment would precipitate my fall. I therefore endeavoured to continue my importance by little ſervices and active officiouſneſs,

neſs, and for a time preſerved myſelf from neglect, by withdrawing all pretences to competition, and ſtudying to pleaſe rather than to ſhine. But my intereſt notwithſtanding this expedient hourly declined, and my couſin's favourite maid began to exchange repartees with me, and conſult me about the alterations of a caſt gown.

I WAS now completely depreſſed, and though I had ſeen mankind enough to know the neceſſity of outward chearfulneſs, I often withdrew to my chamber to vent my grief, or turn my condition in my mind, and examine by what means I might eſcape from perpetual mortification. At laſt, my ſchemes and ſorrows were interrupted by a ſudden change of my relation's behaviour, who one day took an occaſion when we were left together in a room, to bid me ſuffer myſelf no longer to be inſulted, but aſſume the place which he always intended me to hold in the family. He aſſured me, that his wife's preference of her own daughters ſhould never hurt me; and, accompanying his profeſſions with a purſe of gold, ordered me to beſpeak a rich ſuit at the mercer's, and to apply pri-

vately to him for money when I wanted it, and inſinuate that my other friends ſupplied me, which he would take care to confirm.

By this ſtratagem which I did not then underſtand, he filled me with tenderneſs and gratitude, compelled me to repoſe on him as my only ſupport, and produced a neceſſity of private converſation. He often appointed interviews at the houſe of an acquaintance, and ſometimes called on me with a coach and carried me abroad. My ſenſe of his favour, and the deſire of retaining it, diſpoſed me to unlimited complaiſance, and though I ſaw his kindneſs grow every day more fond, I did not ſuffer any ſuſpicion to enter my thoughts. At laſt the wretch took advantage of the familiarity which he enjoyed as my relation, and the ſubmiſſion which he exacted as my benefactor, to complete the ruin of an orphan whom his own promiſes had made indigent, whom his indulgence had melted, and his authority ſubdued.

I know not why it ſhould afford ſubject of exultation, to overpower on any terms the reſolution, or ſurpriſe the caution of a girl; but

but of all the boaſters that deck themſelves in the ſpoils of innocence and beauty, they ſurely have the leaſt pretenſions to triumph, who ſubmit to owe their ſucceſs to ſome caſual influence. They neither employ the graces of fancy, nor the force of underſtanding, in their attempts; they cannot pleaſe their vanity with the art of their approaches, the delicacy of their adulations, the elegance of their addreſs, or the efficacy of their eloquence; nor applaud themſelves as poſſeſſed of any qualities, by which affection is attracted. They ſurmount no obſtacles, they defeat no rivals, but attack only thoſe who cannot reſiſt, and are often content to poſſeſs the body without any ſolicitude to gain the heart.

MANY of theſe deſpicable wretches does my preſent acquaintance with infamy and wickedneſs enable me to number among the heroes of debauchery. Reptiles whom their own ſervants would have deſpiſed, had they not been their ſervants, and with whom beggary would have diſdained intercourſe, had ſhe not been allured by hopes of relief. Many of the beings which are now rioting in taverns or ſhivering

in the ſtreets, have been corrupted not by arts of gallantry which ſtole gradually upon the affections and laid prudence aſleep, but by the fear of loſing benefits which were never intended, or of incurring reſentment which they could not eſcape; ſome have been frighted by maſters, and ſome awed by guardians into ruin.

OUR crime had its uſual conſequence, and he ſoon perceived that I could not long continue in his family. I was diſtracted at the thought of the reproach which I now believed inevitable. He comforted me with hopes of eluding all diſcovery, and often upbraided me with the anxiety, which perhaps none but himſelf ſaw in my countenance; but at laſt mingled his aſſurances of protection and maintenance with menaces of total deſertion, if in the moments of perturbation I ſhould ſuffer his ſecret to eſcape, or endeavour to throw on him any part of my infamy.

THUS paſſed the diſmal hours till my retreat could no longer be delayed. It was pretended that my relations had ſent for me to a diſtant

distant county, and I entered upon a state which shall be described in my next letter.

I am,

SIR, &c.

MISELLA.

NUMB. 171. TUESDAY, *November* 5, 1751.

Tædet cœli convexa tueri. VIRG.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

MISELLA now sits down to continue her narrative. I am convinced that nothing would more powerfully preserve youth from irregularity, or guard inexperience from seduction, than a just description of the condition into which the wanton plunges herself, and therefore hope that my letter may be a sufficient antidote to my example.

AFTER the distraction, hesitation and delays which the timidity of guilt naturally produces,

I was removed to lodgings in a diſtant part of the town under one of the characters commonly aſſumed upon ſuch occaſions. Here being by my circumſtances condemned to ſolitude, I paſſed moſt of my hours in bitterneſs and anguiſh. The converſation of the people with whom I was placed, was not at all capable of engaging my attention or diſpoſſeſſing the reigning ideas. The books which I carried to my retreat were ſuch as heightened my abhorrence of myſelf; for I was not ſo far abandoned as to ſink voluntarily into corruption, or endeavour to conceal from my own mind the enormity of my crime.

My relation remitted none of his fondneſs, but viſited me ſo often that I was ſometimes afraid leſt his aſſiduity ſhould expoſe him to ſuſpicion. Whenever he came he found me weeping, and was therefore leſs delightfully entertained than he expected. After frequent expoſtulations upon the unreaſonableneſs of my ſorrow, and innumerable proteſtations of everlaſting regard, he at laſt found that I was more affected with the loſs of my innocence, than the danger of my fame, and that he might not be diſturbed by my remorſe,

began

began to lull my conſcience with the opiates of irreligion. His arguments were ſuch as my courſe of life has ſince expoſed me often to the neceſſity of hearing, vulgar, empty and fallacious; yet they at firſt confounded me by their novelty, filled me with doubt and perplexity, and interrupted that peace which I began to feel from the ſincerity of my repentance without ſubſtituting any other ſupport. I liſtened awhile to his impious gabble, but its influence was ſoon over-powered by natural reaſon and early education, and the convictions which this new attempt gave me of his baſeneſs compleated my abhorrence. I have heard of barbarians, who, when tempeſts drive ſhips upon their coaſt, decoy them to the rocks that they may plunder their lading, and have always thought that wretches thus mercileſs in their depredations, ought to be deſtroyed by a general inſurrection of all ſocial beings; yet how light is this guilt to the crime of him, who in the agitations of remorſe cuts away the anchor of piety, and when he has drawn aſide credulity from the paths of virtue, hides the light of heaven which would direct her to return. I had hitherto conſidered him as a man equally betrayed with myſelf by the con-

currence of appetite and opportunity; but I now ſaw with horror that he was contriving to perpetuate his gratification, and was deſirous to fit me to his purpoſe by complete and radical corruption.

To eſcape however, was not yet in my power. I could ſupport the expences of my condition, only by the continuance of his favour. He provided all that was neceſſary, and in a few weeks, congratulated me upon my eſcape from the danger which we had both expected with ſo much anxiety. I then began to remind him of his promiſe to reſtore me with my fame uninjured to the world. He promiſed me in general terms, that nothing ſhould be wanting which his power could add to my happineſs, but forbore to releaſe me from from my confinement. I knew how much my reception in the world depended upon my ſpeedy return, and was therefore outragiouſly impatient of his delays, which I now perceived to be only artifices of lewdneſs. He told me at laſt, with an appearance of ſorrow, that all hopes of reſtoration to my former ſtate were for ever precluded; that chance

chance had diſcovered my ſecret and malice divulged it, and that nothing now remained, but to ſeek a retreat more private, where curioſity or hatred could never find us.

The rage, anguiſh, and reſentment, which I felt at this account, are not to be expreſſed. I was in ſo much dread of reproach and infamy, which he repreſented as purſuing me with full cry, that I yielded myſelf implicitly to his diſpoſal, and was removed with a thouſand ſtudied precautions through by-ways and dark paſſages, to another houſe, where I harraſſed him with perpetual ſolicitations for a ſmall annuity, that might enable me to live in the country with obſcurity and innocence.

This demand he at firſt evaded with ardent profeſſions, but in time appeared offended at my importunity and diſtruſt; and having one day endeavoured to ſooth me with uncommon expreſſions of tenderneſs, when he found my diſcontent immoveable, left me with ſome inarticulate murmurs of anger. I was pleaſed that he was at laſt roufed to ſenſibility, and expecting that at his next viſit, he would comply with my requeſt, lived with great

tranquillity upon the money in my hands, and was ſo much pleaſed with this pauſe of perſecution, that I did not reflect how much his abſence had exceeded the uſual intervals, till I was alarmed with the danger of wanting ſubſiſtence. I then ſuddenly contracted my expences, but was unwilling to ſupplicate for aſſiſtance. Neceſſity, however, ſoon overcame my modeſty or my pride, and I applied to him by a letter, but had no anſwer. I writ in terms more preſſing, but without effect. I then ſent an agent to enquire after him, who informed me, that he had quitted his houſe, and was gone with his family to reſide for ſome time upon his eſtate in *Ireland*.

HOWEVER ſhocked at this abrupt departure, I was yet unwilling to believe that he could wholly abandon me, and therefore by the ſale of my cloaths I ſupported myſelf, expecting that every poſt would bring me relief. Thus I paſſed ſeven months between hope and dejection, in a gradual approach to poverty and diſtreſs, emaciated with diſcontent and bewildered with uncertainty. At laſt, my landlady, after many hints of the neceſſity

of a new lover, took the opportunity of my abſence to ſearch my boxes, and miſſing ſome of my apparel, ſeized the remainder for rent, and led me to the door.

To remonſtrate againſt legal cruelty, was vain; to ſupplicate obdurate brutality, was hopeleſs. I went away I knew not whither, and wandered about without any ſettled purpoſe, unacquainted with the uſual expedients of miſery, unqualified for laborious offices, afraid to meet an eye that had ſeen me before, and hopeleſs of relief from thoſe who were ſtrangers to my former condition. Night came on in the midſt of my diſtraction, and I ſtill continued to wander till the menaces of the watch obliged me to ſhelter my ſelf in a covered paſſage.

Next day, I procured a lodging in the backward garret of a mean houſe, and employed my landlady to enquire for a ſervice. My applications were generally rejected for want of a character. At length, I was received at a draper's; but when it was known to my miſtreſs that I had only one gown, and that of ſilk, ſhe was of opinion, that I looked

looked like a thief, and without warning, hurried me away. I then tried to ſupport myſelf by my needle, and by my landlady's recommendation, obtained a little work from a ſhop, and for three weeks lived without repining; but when my punctuality had gained me ſo much reputation, that I was truſted to make up a head of ſome value, one of my fellow lodgers ſtole the lace, and I was obliged to fly from a proſecution.

THUS driven again into the ſtreets, I lived upon the leaſt that could ſupport me, and at night accommodated myſelf under penthouſes as well as I could. At length I became abſolutely pennyleſs; and having ſtrolled all day without ſuſtenance, was at the cloſe of evening accoſted by an elderly man, with an invitation to a tavern. I refuſed him with heſitation; he ſeized me by the hand, and drew me into a neighbouring houſe, where when he ſaw my face pale with hunger, and my eyes ſwelling with tears, he ſpurned me from him, and bad me cant and whine in ſome other place; he for his part would take care of his pockets.

I STILL continued to ſtand in the way, having ſcarcely ſtrength to walk farther, when another ſoon addreſſed me in the ſame manner. When he ſaw the ſame tokens of calamity, he conſidered that I might be obtained at a cheap rate, and therefore quickly made overtures, which I had no longer firmneſs to reject. By this man I was maintained four months in penurious wickedneſs, and then abandoned to my former condition from which I was delivered by another keeper.

IN this abject ſtate I have now paſſed four years, the drudge of extortion and the ſport of drunkenneſs; ſometimes the property of one man, and ſometimes the common prey of accidental lewdneſs; at one time tricked up for ſale by the miſtreſs of a brothel, at another begging in the ſtreets to be relieved from hunger by wickedneſs; without any hope in the day but of finding ſome whom folly or exceſs may expoſe to my allurements, and without any reflections at night, but ſuch as guilt and terror impreſs upon me.

IF

If thoſe who paſs their days in plenty and ſecurity, could viſit for an hour the diſmal receptacles to which the proſtitute retires from her nocturnal excurſions, and ſee the wretches that lie crowded together, mad with intemperance, ghaſtly with famine, nauſeous with filth, and noiſome with diſeaſe; it would not be eaſy for any degree of abhorrence to harden them againſt compaſſion, or to repreſs the deſire which they muſt immediately feel to reſcue ſuch numbers of human beings from a ſtate ſo dreadful.

It is ſaid that in *France* they annually evacuate their ſtreets, and ſhip their proſtitutes and vagabonds to their colonies. If the women that infeſt this city had the ſame opportunity of eſcaping from their miſeries, I believe very little force would be neceſſary; for who among them can dread any change? Many of us indeed are wholly unqualified for any but the moſt ſervile employments, and thoſe perhaps would require the care of a magiſtrate to hinder hem from following the ſame practices in another country; but others are only precluded by infamy from reformation,

tion, and would gladly be delivered on any terms from the neceſſity of guilt and the tyranny of chance. No place but a populous city can afford opportunities for open proſtitution, and where the eye of juſtice can attend to individuals, thoſe who cannot be made good may be reſtrained from miſchief. For my part I ſhould exult at the privilege of baniſhment, and think myſelf happy in any region that ſhould reſtore me once again to honeſty and peace. I am,

SIR, &c.

MISELLA.

NUMB.

NUMB. 172. SATURDAY, *November* 9, 1751.

Sæpe rogare soles qualis sim, Ptisce, futurus
Si fiam locuples; simque repente potens.
Quemquam posse putas mores narrare futuros?
Dic mihi, si fias tu leo, qualis eris?

MART.

NOTHING has been longer observed, than that a change of fortune causes a change of manners; and that it is difficult to conjecture from the conduct of him whom we see in a low condition, how he would act, if wealth and power were put into his hands. But it is generally agreed, that few men are made better by affluence or exaltation; and that the powers of the mind, when they are unbound and expanded by the sunshine of felicity, more frequently luxuriate into follies, than blossom into goodness.

MANY observations have concurred to establish this opinion, and it is not likely soon to become obsolete, for want of new occasions to revive it. The greater part of mankind are corrupt in every condition, and differ in high

high and in low ſtations, only as they have more or fewer opportunities of gratifying their deſires, or as they are more or leſs reſtrained by human cenſures. Many vitiate their principles in the acquiſition of riches; and who can wonder that what is gained by fraud and extortion is enjoyed with tyranny and exceſs?

YET I am willing to believe that the depravation of the mind by external advantages, though certainly not uncommon, yet approaches not ſo nearly to univerſality, as ſome have aſſerted in the bitterneſs of reſentment, or heat of declamation.

WHOEVER riſes above thoſe who once pleaſed themſelves with equality, will have many malevolent gazers at his eminence. To gain ſooner than others that which all purſue with the ſame ardour, and to which all imagine themſelves entitled, will for ever be a crime. When thoſe who ſtarted with us in the race of life, leave us ſo far behind, that we have little hope to overtake them, we revenge our diſappointment by remarks on the arts of ſupplantation by which they gained

gained the advantage, or on the folly and arrogance with which they poſſeſs it. Of them, whoſe riſe we could not hinder, we ſolace ourſelves by prognoſticating the fall.

It is impoſſible for human purity not to betray to an eye thus ſharpened by malignity, ſome ſtains which lay concealed and unregarded while none thought it their intereſt to diſcover them; nor can the moſt circumſpect attention or ſteady rectitude, eſcape blame from cenſors, who have no inclination to approve. Riches therefore perhaps do not ſo often produce crimes as incite accuſers.

The common charge againſt thoſe who riſe above their original condition, is that of pride. It is certain, that ſucceſs naturally confirms us in a favourable opinion of our own abilities. Scarce any man is willing to allot to accident, friendſhip, and a thouſand cauſes which concur in every event without human contrivance or interpoſition, the part which they may juſtly claim in his advancement. We rate ourſelves by our fortune rather than our virtues, and exorbitant claims are quickly produced by imaginary merit. But

capti-

captiouſneſs and jealouſy are likewiſe eaſily offended, and to him who ſtudiouſly looks for an affront, every mode of behaviour will ſupply it; freedom will be rudeneſs, and reſerve ſullenneſs; mirth will be negligence, and ſerioufneſs formality: when he is received with ceremony, diſtance and reſpect are inculcated; if he is treated with familiarity, he concludes himſelf inſulted by ſtudied condeſcenſions.

It muſt however be confeſſed that as all ſudden changes are dangerous, a quick tranſition from proverty to abundance, can ſeldom be made with ſafety. He that has long lived within ſight of pleaſures, which he could not reach, will need more than common moderation, not to loſe his reaſon in unbounded riot, when they are firſt put into his power.

Every poſſeſſion is endeared by novelty; every gratification is exaggerated by deſire. It is difficult not to eſtimate what is lately gained above its real value; it is impoſſible not to annex greater happineſs to that condition from which we are unwillingly excluded,

ded, than nature has qualified us to obtain. For this reaſon, the remote inheritor of an unexpected fortune, may be generally diſtinguiſhed from thoſe who are enriched in the common courſe of lineal deſcent, by his greater haſte to enjoy his wealth, by the finery of his dreſs, the pomp of his equipage, the ſplendor of his furniture, and the luxury of his table.

A THOUSAND things which familiarity diſcovers to be of little value, have power for a time to ſeize the imagination. A *Virginian* king, when the *Europeans* had fixed a lock on his door, was ſo delighted to find his ſubjects admitted or excluded with ſuch facility, that it was from morning to evening his whole employment to turn the key. We among whom locks and keys have been longer in uſe, are inclined to laugh at this *American* amuſement; yet I doubt whether this paper will have a ſingle reader that may not apply the ſtory to himſelf, and recollect ſome hours of his life in which he has been equally overpowered by the tranſitory charms of trivial novelty.

SOME

Some indulgence is due to him whom a happy gale of fortune has ſuddenly tranſported into new regions, where unaccuſtomed luſtre dazzles his eyes, and untaſted delicacies ſolicit his appetite. Let him not be conſidered as loſt in hopeleſs degeneracy, though he for a while forgets the regard due to others, to indulge the contemplation of himſelf, and in the extravagance of his firſt raptures expects that his eye ſhould regulate the motions of all that approach him, and his opinion be received as deciſive and oraculous. His intoxication will give way to time; the madneſs of joy will fume imperceptibly away; the ſenſe of his inſufficiency will ſoon return; he will remember, that the cooperation of others is neceſſary to his happineſs, and learn to conciliate their regard by reciprocal beneficence.

There is, at leaſt, one conſideration which ought to alleviate our cenſures of the powerful and rich. He that imagines them chargeable with all the guilt and folly of their own actions, is very little acquainted with the world.

De

De l'abſolu pouvoir vous ignorez l'yvreſſe,
Et du lache flateur la voix enchantereſſe.

He from whom much can be hoped or feared, will not find many whom ambition, or cowardice will ſuffer to be ſincere, or who, cultivate his regard with any other purpoſe, than to comply with all his practices however vitious, and with all his ſentiments however abſurd. While we live upon the level with the reſt of mankind, we are reminded of our duty by the admonitions of friends, and reproaches of enemies; but men who ſtand in the higheſt ranks of ſociety, ſeldom hear of their faults; if by any accident an opprobrious clamour reaches their ears, flattery is always at hand to pour in her opiates, to quiet conviction and obtund remorſe.

Favour is ſeldom ſo certainly gained as by conformity in vice. Virtue can ſtand without aſſiſtance, and conſiders herſelf as very little obliged by countenance and approbation; but vice, always timorous, eagerly ſeeks the ſhelter of crouds, and ſupport of confederacy. The ſycophant therefore, thinks

it

it not neceſſary to adopt the good qualities of his patron, but employs all his art on his weakneſſes and follies, regales his reigning vanity, or ſtimulates his prevalent deſire.

VIRTUE is ſufficiently difficult in any circumſtances, but the difficulty is encreaſed when reproof and advice are frighted away. In common life, reaſon and conſcience have only the appetites and paſſions to encounter, but in higher ſtations, they muſt oppoſe artifice and adulation. He therefore, that yields to ſuch temptations, cannot give thoſe who look upon his miſcarriage much reaſon for exultation, ſince few can juſtly preſume that from the ſame ſnare they ſhould have been able to eſcape.

FINIS.

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